A PRESIDENT OF FEMALE PERFECTION.

Preſented to the ſerious Meditation and peruſal of all modeſt WOMEN, who deſire to live under the Government of Vertue, and are obedient to her Laws.

Containing an Hiſtoricall diſcourſe of the Beſt and pincipalleſt for Holineſs and Vertue of that SEX.

Illuſtrated with ſundry *Poems* and *Figures*, pertinent to the Story.

By a Perſon of Honour.

—Luke 1. 28. *Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: bleſſed art thou among women.*

LONDON,

Printed by *J. L.* and are to be old by *Auſtin Rice*, at the *Three Hearts* in St *Pauls* Church-yard, near the Weſt end. 1656.

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TO THE MOST Happy Miſtreſſe of all imaginable Graces, which beautifie and ennoble both body and minde, the Lady *Theophila Coke*.

Madame,

MY Motives for the Dedication of this enſuing Treatiſe to your

Ladiſhip, are three; you
Knowledge, your Ver
tue, and my owne Ob
ligation. For the firſt;
it is to you a ſingular Or
nament, and Content,
is it to me a ſpeciall com
fort; for you cannot de
light more to underſtanc
then I doe to be under
ſtood. Had I written t
your Ladiſhip in th
Roman Language, th
French, the Italian, or th

Spa

Spaniſh, they had beene almoſt as familiar to you as this your native Tongue, in which you are Miſtreſſe of ſo great an Elegancy, that no words are ſo fit as your owne, to eternize your owne actions. But theſe are only the conveyances of Learning, the vaſt body whereof you have fathom'd, and in every ſeverall part of it are Mi-

ſtreſſe of as much, as the
want of an Academicke
education, and the mani-
fold divertments incident
to your ſexe, permit. And
of this ineſtimable trea-
ſure, Modeſty keeps the
key, and ſhuts out Oſten-
tation, not ſuffering a
word to iſſue forth with-
out a Grace to attend it.
Hence it comes to paſſe,
that as it is impoſsible to
handle perfumes without
bea-

hearing away part of their
kent; ſo to converſe with
ni-u without ſavouring
nt your goodneſſe. Nor
ndes your Diſcourſe a-
a-ne reliſh of your ſweet
heiſpoſition; for you reade
n-t of a vertue, which you
a-thwith put not into
h-t, & adde to it a greater
it-auty, then it had in the
ſe, kample from which
tou deriv'd it. The conſi-
utratiõ, Madam, of theſe
a-

your

your Excellencies co
firm'd in me a beliefe, th
this portraiture (thou
imperfect) of the pri
Preſident of femall Pe
fection, would provi
Preſent moſt acceptav
to your Ladiſhip ,
whoſe innocency
make as neer an appro
as any thing mortall a
doe. Should I ſay yo
are without ſinne, r
ſhould impiouſly cal

cradict the Scriptures;
,thould I ſay you have a-
ouy, I ſhould unjuſtly goe
rigainſt mine own know-
Pdge; for neither I, nor I
vink, Envy her ſelf could
taver yet diſcover in you
,e leaſt imperfection.
ure I am if you have in-
rormities, they are inte-
llate, unleſſe you place
y pur owne Conſcience
e,r a witneſſe, which it
cill not better be-
come

come to judge it selfe, the cu
it will doe my Chari sh
to cleare it. Nor is this p so
rity of yours froward a T
formall, but gentle, fre da
and communicative. Y pe
shew the world that the a
is a christian freedome, to
which we may lawful me
partake. By your fa tar
Demeanour you cleer pa
demonstrate, that sanc yo
ty may be without A wo
sterity, and vertue ter

cure

curely ſociable, and that
ſhee is more fruitfull in
ſociety, than in ſolitude.
This teſtimony, Ma-
dame, Truth, and the
people (whoſe Regiſter
am) commanded mee
to give You, and com-
mend to Poſterity. I
cannot deſcend to ſuch
baſeneſſe, as to flatter
you, yet (if I ſhould,)
would not you be flat-
ter'd, who are like a
re ſweet

come to judge it ſelfe, then it will doe my Charity to cleare it. Nor is this purity of yours froward and formall, but gentle, free, and communicative. You ſhew the world that there is a chriſtian freedome, of which we may lawfully partake. By your faire Demeanour you cleerly demonſtrate, that ſanctity may be without Auſterity, and vertue ſecurely

curely ſociable, and that ſhee is more fruitfull in ſociety, than in ſolitude. This teſtimony, Madame, Truth, and the people (whoſe Regiſter I am) commanded mee to give You, and commend to Poſterity. I cannot deſcend to ſuch baſeneſſe, as to flatter you, yet (if I ſhould,) would not you be flatter'd, who are like a

ſweet

ſweet Inſtrument, that ſends forth a delightfull ſound without being ſenſible of its owne Harmony. No, no, heaven forbid my lines ſhould bee like thoſe Sacrifices, out of which they uſed to plucke the heart, but leave the tongue behinde. I ſeriouſly proteſt, that if you were Empreſſe of the World, and were withall as eminent in Vice, as you

you are in Vertue, I would not give you the leaſt praiſe in exchange for all your large poſſeſſions; for no gold ſhall ever winne mee to guild ſinne. And I freely confeſſe that if within the large circuit of my Converſation, or Reading, I could have found a feminine Example, fairer then your owne, to her perufall, if living, I had commended

mended this Treatise, if dead, had bequeath'd it to her memory. Such a prostituted Eloquence, as made Apologies for *Messalina*, and *Quartilla*, are to me odious. But wee must warily distinguish betweene a grosse Flattery, and a due Praise; the latter of which, saith *Pliny*, no man contemneth till hee hath left to doe things praiseworthy. As we

Plinius secundus in Epist.

we cannot over-worſhip the true Deity, ſo wee cannot over-praiſe a true Piety. It onely now reſteth, that I offer up to your Ladiſhip, two Petitions; the firſt of which is, that you would vouchſafe to permit this Booke, under your gratious Patronage, to doe that where you are not, which you performe where you are; that is, to confirme

the good, and convert the bad. The next is, that your Ladiſhip would be pleaſed to accept of my ſubmiſsive Gratitude, which, though great, can be no way proportionable to the infinity of your favours. Theſe I would endeavour here to ſumme up, were I not deterred from the attempt by Impoſsibility, and your nobleſt Nature, to which no-

nothing is more displeasing, than thankes for an old Benefit, nothing more pleasing, than the conferring of a new. I choose therefore rather to be argued of Ingratitude, than of offending your Ladiship, whose service next to that of GOD, I justly glory in, it being the

onely Honour now left,

Your Ladiſhips moſt humble,

loyall Servant,

ANTH. STAFFORD

To the Feminine Reader.

You are here presented by an extreme Honourer of your sexe, with a Mirrour of Femall perfection. It is not a Glasse wherein a Babe, a Foole, or a Monster may see it selfe, as well as you. By this you cannot curle your haires, fill up your wrinckles, and so alter your

looks, that Nature who made you, knowes you no more, but vtterly forgets her owne Workmanship. By this you cannot lay spots on your faces, but take them out of your soules, you may. By this you cannot compose your Countenances, but your Minde you shall, and give them a never fading Beauty. In this you may discerne all Vertues, and all Graces at their full growth. Here you may discover Charity distributing, Temperancy abstaining, Patience suffering, Humanity yeelding, Chastity resisting, Valour combating, and Prudency

assi-

assisting all these. Here any ornament you already have, you may better, and any you have not, you may purchase at the easie rate of reading and imitating. Here you may learne to transforme your ugly Vices into as amiable Vertues. This Glasse will not flatter you, nor if you be angry with it for shewing your Deformities, can you breake it. Both the matter, and the reflections here are all internall, and therefore not tangible. This is shee, whose Embleme ingenious Antiquity made an Vnicorne, laying his head in the lappe of a Virgin. This is

the faire tree, whose lovely fruit once tasted expels not for a time onely, but for ever the venome of the most deadly sinnes. This is she, who was on Earth a Confirmer of the good, and a reformer of the reprobate. All her Visitants were but so many Converts, whose bad affections, and erronious opinions, the sweetnesse of her discourse had rectified The Leprosie of sinne was her daily cure, and they (whom vice had blinded) were by her restored to their inward sight, and their prostrate soules adored divine, Majesticall vertue, residing in this sa-

ſacred Temple. The conference with her rais'd them above themſelves, and enfranchis'd their ſoules till then, chained to their bodies. The knowledge of her, humbled the moſt proud natures, for the luſtre of her Merits, render'd their owne obſcure. O make the emulation of this chaſte Turtle your onely ſtudy! and not in words onely, but in deeds alſo ſhew your ſelves Proficients; for Vertues meditated, and not acted, do but puffe us up the more, wee eaſily beleeving, that wee are what we reſolve to be. On this, ground your beliefe, that ſhee amongſt

amongſt you who ſhall conſtant
treadin her paths, ſhall at leng
arrive at the Celeſtiall Paradi
which now ſhe inhabits, and ſh
receive this ſalutation, not fro
an Angell, but from God hi
ſelfe; Welcome thou fa
ſoule, full of Grace, enter in
the Glory, I have prepared f
thee.

To the Maſculine Reader.

HEr to you alſo (though of a different ſexe) this booke belongs, to whom the ſacred ſubject of it brought the ſame eternall benefit, ſhee did to her owne kinde. Neither doth ſhe onely require your Gratitude, but your Imitation, whoſe meaneſt perfection farre excels all your

your ſo long vanted maſculine
merits. I doubt not but by th
more, and leſſe knowing o
you, I ſhall be diverſly judg
ed. The firſt will argue mee o
indiſcretion in that I choſe no
a Matter of a higher natur
whereby to make a demon
ſtration of my ſufficiency. T
theſe I ſhape this anſwer, tha
my Invention could not ſoar
higher, for whether wee re
gard her perſon, or her divin
Gifts, ſhee is in Dignity nex
God himſelfe. There is no
thing of ſo ſublime a ſtraine a
Vertue, which enters Hea
ven

ven, when Subtility and Curioſity are juſtly excluded. It is vertue muſt ſave us; for in knowledge the Divell himſelfe farre exceeds us. There is no Argument, as I take it, ſo important, or concernes us ſo much as that of our ſalvation. Theſe men would have mee buſie my ſelfe in the Phyſicks, to finde out of what, not wherefore I am made: Or in the Mathematickes, to learne how farre it is to Heaven, not how to come thither: Or in Divinity, to bee inquiſitive whether or no Chriſts miraculous

your ſo long vanted maſculin
merits. I doubt not but by th
more, and leſſe knowing o
you, I ſhall be diverſly judg
ed. The firſt will argue mee o
indiſcretion in that I chooſe no
a Matter of a higher natur
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ſtration of my ſufficiency. T
theſe I ſhape this anſwer, tha
my Invention could not ſoar
higher, for whether wee re
gard her perſon, or her divin
Gifts, ſhee is in Dignity nex
God himſelfe. There is no
thing of ſo ſublime a ſtraine a
Vertue, which enters Hea
ven

ven, when Subtility and Curiosity are justly excluded. It is vertue must save us; for in knowledge the Divell himselfe farre exceeds us. There is no Argument, as I take it, so important, or concernes us so much as that of our salvation. These men would have mee busie my selfe in the Physicks, to finde out of what, not wherefore I am made: Or in the Mathematickes, to learne how farre it is to Heaven, not how to come thither: Or in Divinity, to bee inquisitive whether or no Christs miraculous

culous feeding of so many, w
by augmentation, or mult
plication of the Loaves an
Fishes: Whether or no the
who were born with sight,
afterwards lost it, being resto
red to it againe by Christ, sa
better after the Cure, tha
they did before their blind
nesse; And whether or no t
Dead, who rose with our S
viour, ascended with him,
were againe reduc't to du
To these needlesse accute fo
lies I aspire not How man
are there now in Hell, wh
while they liv'd here, wer
esteem

eſteem'd the Organs of the Sciences, the Temples of VViſedome, nay Oracles, as if they had beene form'd in Heaven, and ſent downe hither full fraught with Gods owne ſecrets, yet now deteſt their former vaine Knowledge, as much as the Darkeneſſe they lived in? But in this kingdome of Woe and Horrour, none of vertues ſubiects ever reſided. Let them therefore cenſure on, they ſhall not ſo much as ſhake my ſecurity; for I know it fares with univerſall Learning, as with the

Vni-

Vniverſe, wherein there ar
more Delinquents then Iudg
es. The opinions of theſe
can well tollerate, becauſe the
proceed from Science, thoug
erronious. But there are ſom
whom I have heard to paſſ
their caſting verdicts on th
moſt meriting Authors, wh
deſerve themſelves to be
hang'd for ſo often violatin
their owne mother tongu
did not their ignorance plead
their pardon. Let theſe poor
wretched things, who wha
they heare in the laſt compa
ny, vent for their owne in th
nex

next, ſhare amongſt them my ſcorne, and pitty, as being far below my anger. I am not ignorant that he who feares the pale meager Family of the Zoili, muſt onely write to his owne *Lar*. If to the truely vertuous, the truely underſtanding, I can approve theſe my humble indeavours, and draw any one ſoule, but one degree nearer to goodneſſe, my holy ambition, and my no ſmall labour ſhall receive an ample ſatisfaction.

It now remaines that as to theſe latter, I ſeeke to approve

all my actions, ſo to them
likewiſe eſſay to iuſtifie th
preſent worke. I am the fir
(to my knowledge) who ha
written in our vulgar tongu
on this our bleſſed Virgin
drawne thereto I confeſſe b
the ſtrength rather of affect
on, than of ability. Yet with
all I profeſſe that I am her ad
mirer, not her Idolater, an
that I no way allow of the
profane cuſtome, who robb
God of his Honour, and be
ſtow it on her. But this I wi
ſay, that though I impute no
the late troubles and affliction

of the Proteſtant party in *Germany*, to the ſmall reverence there paid her (many of Gods iudgements according to Saint *Auſtin*, being ſecret, none iniuſt) yet truely I beleeve that the undervaluing of one ſo great, and deere in Chriſts eſteeme, cannot but bee diſpleaſing to him, and that the more we aſcribe to her (ſetting Invocation apart) the more gratious we appeare in his ſight. I have beene as cautious in the penning of this Treatiſe, as poſſibly I could, and (in imitation) of Vertues

owne ſelfe) have kept the meane. But all pretenders to Divinity know, that without the helpe of Eccleſiaſticall Hiſtory, we can ſpeake little of her life, or death, ſo ſparing is the holy Writ in the mention of her. The ſcholaſticall and Eccleſiaſtical Writers inſerted in this Booke to truſt, or diſtruſt too much, is alike erroneous, and therefore I referre all to the diſcretiō of the Reader. I will onely adde this, that ſince the finiſhing of this ſtory, I have read a booke of the now Biſhop of *Chicheſter*, entituled

tituled *Apparatus, &c.* and am glad to finde that I have not digreſſed from him in any one particular. I conclude with this proteſtation, that if I have ſwerved in any the leaſt point from the tenents received in the Engliſh Church, I ſhall bee moſt ready to acknowledge my ſelfe a true Penitent. Farewell.

Meditationes poeticæ & Christianæ in annunciationem beatæ Virginis,

W. A.

Aue Maria.

GAuisa es quondam, perque omnia secula gaude,
Omnia quæ gaudI secula tempus habet.
Stipasti quæ lætitia castum alueat alui.
Æquum est lætitiæ mella ut in aur bibas.

Tu gaudI verbum peperiſti, & dicit
Avete
Omnibus: atque omnis terra revi-
brat Ave.
Sed tu ſalvificum genuiſti in ſecula
Salve:
Noſtra eccho nudum nomen hono-
ris, Ave.

Gratia plena.

Quam ſunt plena ſuo diſtenta alvea-
ria melle,
Quod flore evario Chymica ſtillat
apis:
Quam plena eſt adamante ſuo, teres
area gemmæ,
Quæ quod non recipit, prenſat amo-
re decus:
Quam plena eſt radijs ſolaribus aurea
luna,
Oppoſitum toto cum bibit orbe jubar:

Quam plena eſt Charitum, Charitum
modulata chorea,
Tam plena eſt decoris virgo Mariæ
Dei.
Invide quid fontem criſpas? mirabile non eſt
Si gravida eſt Charitum, qua gravidata Deo eſt.

Dominus tecum.

Humani lapſum generis ſub triſtibus
umbris
Luxerat Angelici curia tota chori,
Et reparari iterum coniuncti numinis
anſa
Virgineo optavit poſſe videre ſinu.
O homo quam ſit grata ſalus tibi propria! quando
Angelica exultat turba ſalute tua.

Benedicta tu in mulieribus.

Mor-

Morborum mors intravit longo ordine mundum,
Fœminea quondam solicitata manu:
Sic Charitum Vita *intravit longo agmine mundum,*
Fœminea Mariæ solicitata fide.
Fons nobis vitæ, vitã pariendo fuisti.
Nosque erimus laudis fons, benedicta tibi.
Nam dignum est per quam cœpit benedictio vitæ,
Vt sit præ sexu ter benedicta suo.

Et benedictus fructus ventris tui.

Fructa esse bonum pleno de pectore verbum,
Divino sese prædicat ore pater.
Hoc Christus verbum est, quod de bonitatis abysso,
Effudit casto virgo Maria sinu.

Gra-

Gratum eſt, & iuſtum pariter, Bene-
dictio ut ipſa
Fuſa repercuſſo ſit benedicta ſono.

Spiritus ſanctus ſuperveniet in te

Vt Zephiri teneris ubi ſibilat halitus
hortis,
Dulcis adoratæ depluit aura roſæ:
Spiritus at flori tam molliter oſcu-
libat
Vt non virgineos explicet ore ſinus
Sic Mariam ſanctus Deitatis ſpiritus
afflat:
Numina & caſtus flumina fundat
onyx.
Nec tamen æterni ſolvit tibi clauſtra
pudoris:
Statque tuæ implicito culmine turbæ
roſæ.
Chriſtum illibata de virgine creatum;
Sic illibato eſt cortice natus odor.

Et virtus altissimi obumbrabit tibi
Epigramma dissertum.

Vt genuit magnum pater extra tempora natum :
Tempore sic natum virgo Maria brevem.
Prodijt in mundum sibi par, substantia dispar :
Vt sine matre Deus, sic sine patre puer.
Grande puerperium Deus est : maiusque videtur
Non eguisse viro, non eguisse Deâ.
Casta fugit lucem, virgo paritura sub umbrâ :
Et paritura umbram præstitit ipse Deus.
O condescensus nova gratia : luminis Author
Ipse creaturæ vertitur umbra suæ.

Vtque

Vtque invisibilis lucis pater au
habetur.
Sic est visibilis virgo Maria ge
Visurus numen Moses penetravi
umbram:
Tunc Christus numen tunc p
umbra fuit.
Migremus tenebræ ad lucem, dum
mine verso,
Proque die tenebra est, pro tene
que dies.

THE GHYRLOND of the blessed Virgin MARIE.

HEre, are five letters in this blessed Name,
Which, chang'd, a five-fold mysterie designe,
The M. *the* Myrtle, A. *the* Almonds clame,
R. Rose, I. Ivy, E. *sweet* Eglantine.

These forme thy Ghyrlond. Wherof Myrtle *green,*
The gladdest ground to all the numbred-five,
Is so implexed, and laid in, between,
As Love, here studied to keep Grace alive.

The

The ſecond ſtring is the ſweet Almond *bloome*
Ymounted high upon Selinis *creſt:*
As it, alone, (and onely it) had roome,
To knit thy Crowne, and glorifie the reſt.

The third, is from the garden call'd the Roſe,
The Eye of flowers, worthy, for his ſcent,
To top the faireſt Lillie, now, that growes,
With wonder on the thorny regiment.

The fourth is humble Ivy, *interſert,*
But lowlie laid, as on the earth aſleep,
Preſerved, in her ántique bed of Vert, (*creep*
No faith's more firme, or flat, then, where't dot

But, that which ſummes all, is the Eglantine,
Which, of the field is clep'd the ſweeteſt brier,
Inflam'd with ardor to that myſtick Shine,
In Moles *buſh, un-waſted in the fire.*

Thus, Love, and Hope, and burning Charitie,
(Divineſt graces) are ſo entermixt,
With od'rous ſweets and ſoft humiliatie,
As if they 'ador'd the Head, wheron th'are fixt

The

THE REVERSE on the backe ſide.

THeſe Myſteries do point to three more great,
On the reverſe of this your circling crowne,
All, pouring their ful ſhowre of graces downe,
The glorious Trinity *in* Vnion *met.*

Daughter, and Mother, and the Spouſe of GOD,
Alike of kin, to that moſt bleſſed Trine,
Of Perſons, yet in Vnion (ONE) divine.
How are thy gifts, and graces blaz'd abroad!

Moſt holy, & pure Virgin, bleſſed Mayd, (Tower,
Sweet Tree of Life, King Davids *Strength and*
The Houſe of gold, the Gate of heavens power,
The Morning-ſtar, whoſe light our Fal hath ſtay'd

Great Queen of Queens, moſt mild, moſt meek, moſt
Moſt venerable. Cauſe of all our joy. (wiſe,
Whoſe chearfull look our ſadneſſe doth deſtroy,
And art the ſpotleſſe Mirrour to Mans eyes.

The

The Seat of Sapience, *the moſt lovely Mother,*
And moſt to be admired of thy Sexe,
Who mad'ſt us happy all, in thy reflexe,
By bringing forth GOD's *onely* Son, *no other.*

Thou Throne of glory, beauteous as the Moon,
The roſie Morning, or the riſing Sun,
Who like a Giant haſts his courſe to run,
Till he hath reach'd his two-fold point of Noon.

How are thy gifts and graces blaz'd abro'd,
Through all the lines of this circumference,
T'imprint in all purg'd hearts this virgin ſen
Of being Daughter, Mother, Spouſe of GOD!

A Pannegyricke upon the bleſſed Virgin MARY.

VVHat eye dares ſearch the
brightneſſe of the Sun?
What Pencill draw it? what con-
ception
Is cleane enough thy pureneſſe to
deſcry,
Or ſtrong enough to ſpeake thy
Dignity
Bleſt Mother of our Lord, whoſe
happy ſtate,
None but an Angels tongue did
firſt relate?
Thou wert on earth a ſtarre moſt
heavenly bright,

That didſt bring forth the Sunne
that lent thee light.
An earthly veſſell full of heavenly
grace,
That broughſt forth life to *Adam's*
dying race:
For God on earth thou wert his
royall throne,
The quarry to cut out our cornet
ſtone,
The choſen cloth to make him a
mortall weed,
Soile bleſt with fruit, yet free from
mortall ſeed.
In marriage bands thou ledſt a
Virgin life,
And though untouch'd, becam'ſt
a fruitfull wife.
Though thou to aged *Ioſeph* were
aſſur'd,
No carnall love that ſacred league
procur'd,

All vaine delights were farre from
your assent,
For chast by vow you seal'd your
cha st intent.
Thus God his Paradise to *Ioseph*
lent,
Wherein to plant the Tree of life
he meant,
To raise a birth miraculous, and
by
His sacred wayes of power dis-
close that high
And holy Mystery, which Angels
(though
So full of light) desir'd to peepe
into.
When thou thy Maker didst bring
forth, and he
Whose age had beene from all e-
ternity,
Was borne an Infant from thy
blessed wombe.

He lay encloſed in that narrow
roome,
Whoſe greatneſſe heaven & earth
could not containe.
Who made the world, and natur
did ordaine,
Was made of thy fleſh; he, who
open'd hand
Feeds all the Creatures both by
ſea and land;
That even to thee thy life and be
ing lent,
Did from thy breaſt receive his
nouriſhment.
His birth no humane tongues were
fit to ſing.
Th' Angellike Quire did greet
their new-borne King,
So bright a conſort, and ſo ſweet
a lay
Made night more faire and cheer
full than the day,

An

And little *Bethlem* with more glo-
ry fill'd,
Than all the Roman Pallaces
could yeeld.
How wondrous great is then thy
happineſſe
That wert his Mother? but who
can expreſſe
So high a bliſſe? when we deſire
to fame
Some other Maid or vertuous wo-
mans name,
When we of other Ladies write
the lives,
Of chaſte Maides, happy Mothers,
conſtant Wives,
Such as beſt Writers have re-
nown'd of yore,
When we have told their noble
vertues o're,
We draw examples, and beſides
their owne

Faire ſtories, praiſe them by com-
pariſon.
But in thy life we cannot; thou
alone
Canſt not at al admit compariſon
So far thy happy name and ho-
nour lives,
Above all other Mothers, Maids
or Wives,
That 'twere a ſinne, when we th
ſtory tell,
So much as once to thinke of P
ralell.
Wee'l let thee in thine owne pur
titles live,
And ſpeake no praiſe of thee bu
poſitive,
As when we ſay all ages, nation
all
Shall thee moſt happy amon
women call,

Th

That of the greateſt bleſſing God
ere ſent
To ſinfull man, thou wert the in-
ſtrument.

T. M.

A Panegyricke on th
blessed Virgin MARY.

I Doe not tremble, when I write
A Mistresse praise, but with delig
Can dive for Pearles into the flood,
Fly through every Garden, wood,
Stealing the choice of flowrs, & wind
To dresse her body or her minde,
Nay the Saints and Angels are
Not safe in Heaven, till she be fair
And rich as they, nor will this doe
Vntill she be my Idoll too:
With this sacriledge I dispence,
No fright is in my Conscience,
My hand starts not, nor do I then
Finde any quakings in my pen;
Whose every drop of Inke within,

Dwe

Dwels as in me, my Parents ſinne,
And prayſes on the Paper wrot,
Have but conſpir'd to make a blot,
Why ſhould ſuch fears invade me now,
That writes on her? to whom doe bow
The ſoules of all the iuſt, whoſe place
Is next to Gods, and in his face
All creatures and delights doth ſee
As darling of the Trinitie;
To whom the Hierarchy doth throng,
And for whom Heaven is all one ſong.
Ioyes ſhould poſſeſſe my ſpirit here,
But pious ioyes are mixt with feare.
Put off thy ſhooe, 'tis holy ground,
For here the flaming Buſh is found,
The miſticke Roſe, the Iv'ry Tower,
The morning Star, & Davids bower,
The Rod of Moſes, and of Ieſſe,
The fountaine ſealed, Gideons fleece,
A woman cloathed with the Sunne,
The beauteous Throne of Solomon,
The Garden ſhut, the living ſpring,

The Tabernacle of the King,
The Altar breathing ſacred fume,
The Heaven diſtilling honie-com
The untouch'd Lilly, full of dew,
A Mother, yet a Virgin true,
Before, and after ſhe brought forth
(Our ranſome of Eternall worth)
Both God & man, what voice can
This myſtery, or Cherubs wing
Lend from his golden ſtocke, a P
To write, how heaven came down
(m

Here feare, and wonder ſo advanc
My ſoule, it muſt obey a Trance.

A Panegyricke dedicated to the eternall Memory, and glorious Fame of the blessed Virgin MARY.

LEnd me *Elias* Chariot to inspire
My feeble Muse. Wheeles of celestiall fire
eare her from Earth, purge ev'ry looser thought
his duller ayre, or that grosse Dunghill wrought.

Let

Let all her ſtraines be pure, clo
her in white,
And innocent wit; let her cha
ſoule delight
In no adulterate line, no wan
ſenſe,
Let all her knowledge be her
nocence
As *Adams* ere he fell; then
ſhe raiſe
A maiden ſpirit to chant a V
gins praiſe.
Yet let her not be barren,
bring forth
Zeale to each eare ſhe ſtrikes,
ſhall her worth
Shine like the Saint ſhe ſings
wonders doe,
And be as ſhe a Maide, and M
ther too.
Inſtruct me you mine Orders h
to ſing,

let a Cherubin pluck me from his wing,
quill to write the ſtory, or en-treate
our brother *Gabriel* from his bleſſed ſeate
o viſit Earth, and teach mee, leſt I miſſe
o ſalute MARY in a voyce like his.

eepe on your eyes faire Virgins long hath ſtaid,
iſe, and to *Bethlem* run to ſee a Maide.
iſe Matrons, in your armes your infants beare,
o *Bethlem* haſte, and ſee Gods Mother there.
latrons, and Virgins runne, haſte all to ſee,

Both

Both joyn'd in one a fruit
Chaſtity.
Then every Matron this g
wonder tell,
And every Virgin chant a C
ticle,
Sing bleſſed *Mary's* praiſe,
that for her
Iehovah rivall'd with a Carp
ter.
Mary deriv'd from two moſt g
rious Springs
The bloud of *Levies* Prieſts,
Iudah's Kings,
Which did as in a Type fo
ſhew her ſtory, *
To be the Mother both of Gr
and Glory.
Sing of her birth, how not
deem'd with prize,
Her Father payd her as a ſa
fice

*Auſtin, Baronius, *and others, hold that ſhe was deſcended from the Tribe of* Levi, *which the late Biſhop of* Chicheſter *oppoſeth.*

ue to his God, when others ran-
ſom'd be
With Shekles, as it were a ſla-
very
o ſerve their Maker, and the Pa-
rents feare
o truſt him with the wardſhippe
of their heire.
t the bleſt Maide, whom An-
gels now admire,
lad they have got her to en-
creaſe their Quire)
child-hood firſt her Virgin
taske begun,
nd in the Temple pray'd a pret-
ty Nun;
hat the firſt breath ſhe ſuckt was
holy aire,
nd the firſt word ſhe learn'd to
liſpe, was pray'r.
here might you ſee an Infant
Saint out-vie

The Levites in Devotion, and
eye
Caſt up to heaven ere it the ea
had knowne;
Whole ſhowers of teares in pi
ſorrow ſhowne
For *Eves* offence, not hers, ſ
did begin
To learne Repentance ere
knew to ſinne.
Each morning ſtrove the e
Larke, and ſhe
Who firſt ſhould chant thei
cred melody.
He that had ſeene her migh
very ſence
Have prophecied an Age of In
cence
Reborne with her. I ſhould h
thought her one
Of the great Cherubins ſent fr
its throne

To breed a race of Angels, and
ſupply
Their roome that fell by proud
Apoſtaſie.
Thus ſhe grew up in zeale, and
holy feares,
Yet ſtill Devotion would out-bid
her yeares,
Till * at fifteen (when others ho-
lier fires
Grow to more wanton, and un-
chaſte deſires)
The Prieſts bethought a husband
for her bed;
But *Mary's* thoughts all unto Hea-
ven were fled.
Yet was ſhe *Ioſephs* Spouſe, not
with th'intent
T'unlooſe her Uirgin Zone, but
to prevent
The ſutes of others, and enjoy
more free

* *The opinion of* Mantuan, *how true I know not.*

The treasure of unspotted Ch
stity.
Who will beleeve the wonde
have said?
Mary a husband tooke, to live
Maide.
Dare not thou *Ioseph* to appro
too neare
This heavenly Arke, thy God
habits there.
Touch not that sanctifi'd, and h
low'd wombe,
Whence thy salvation, and t
worlds must come:
For 'tis not, Carpenter, thy A
that can
Repaire the Fabricke of selfe-r
in'd man:
Mary must Bride to thy Creato
be,
And clad in flesh part of the Tr
nity.

Se

See God hath ſent from his eternall ſphere,
Bleſt *Gabriel*, his fire-wing'd Meſſenger,
Who crown'd with Glory, and a wreath of Light,
Salutes the Virgin, doubtfull of the ſight,
And courts her thus. Haile *Mary* full of grace,
(Wherewith a bluſh roſe in her baſhfull face,
And verifi'd his words) the Lord, quoth he,
Hath left his Heaven, and comes to dwell in thee;
Bleſt amongſt women, in thy ſexe divine;
For ev'ry breſt ſalvation ſucks from thine.
Suppoſe a King had ſome gay favorite ſent

With powerfull Rhetoricke, and
Court complement
To win a Country Girle. What
could ſhe gueſſe
But 'twas ſome ſcorne on her un-
worthineſſe?
So *Mary* ignorant what her Ver-
tue was,
(For ſhe had made Humility her
glaſſe)
Doubts what the words ſhould
meane, wonders to heare
This ſalutation, and miſtruſts her
eare.
And when the Angell tels her of
a Sonne,
To ſit on Princely *Davids* royall
Throne,
To rule the houſe of *Iacob*, and to
be
A ſceptred Prince to all Eterni-
ty,

Her

Her modeſt ſoule no vaine Ambition ſway'd,
She rather choſe to live an humble Maid,
Then a Queene Mother. How can I, quoth ſhe,
Who nere knew man, and am a Votary
Nere to know any, teeme with ſuch a birth,
Who would not for the treaſure of the earth
Be falſe unto my vowes? My love is pray'r,
And piety all the ſonnes I meane to beare.
But when the Angell did Gods will relate,
That he would get a ſonne that might create,
She yeelds a Handmaid to her Lords deſire.

O I but thinke how ſuch ſtrang
newes would fire
Some Ladies hearts with prid
when they ſhould heare
Gods growne enamour'd on the
beauties were!
How they would thinke ther
ſelves worthy the bed
Of their Creatour, and advan
their head
Above Mortality, promiſing the
eyes
To be made Stars to glorifie th
skies!
But *Mary's* zeale ſwell'd highe
then her pride;
Nothing mov'd that, not whe
old *Zachary's* Bride
Felt the Babe dance, and leap
within her wombe,
For joy the Mother of his Lor
was come,

But bleſs'd her God regarded her eſtate,
And ſung not to her ſelfe, *Magnificat.*
Nor when the Shepheards did relate their ſtory
That was as full of wonder as of Glory,
But tooke the Angels Hymne, and chanted then
Glory to God on high, good will to men.
Nor when three Kings did to her Cratch reſort,
Did ſhee conceive her Stable turn'd a Court,
When to a Prieſt, a Prophet, and a King,
They ſev'rall brought their ſev'rall offring.
She tooke not to delight a wanton ſenſe.

The pretious Myrrhe, and odrou
Frankincenſe,
Nor did with covetous greed
eyes behold
The Eaſterne wealth (the thir
mans treaſure) gold;
Her Sonne, and Saviours honou
to prefer,
Was Mirrhe, was Frankincenſe
was gold to her.
Her life was all Humility, Muſ
make haſte
To ſing her Death, and how he
life being paſt,
Heaven entertain'd her; for thei
Hymnes divine
Are fitter to relate her praiſe, than
thine.
Thou haſt not power t'unfold
with what a feare
She fled to *Ægypt*, and continu'd
there

To

To ſave her Infants life, not skill
to tell
How much ſhe joy'd at ev'ry Mi-
racle.
Preſume not thou to number
what her eyes
Showre forth in teares, as on the
Croſſe ſhe ſpies
Her Sonne, and Saviour, nor what
care ſhe ſhow'd,
To gather up the drops of bloud
that flow'd
Pure Balſome from his ſide; nor
venture on
To write with what a violent
zeale ſhe run
To begge with *Ioſeph* he a Tombe
might have,
By whom we all are ranſom'd
from the Grave.
Me thinks I ſee how by his Croſſe
ſhe ſtood,

How

How her ſad eyes vide teares,
he dropt bloud;
Her eyes more ſad, cauſe they
tain'd their ſight,
And could not doe as Heaven
looſe their light.
Her armes expreſſe the Cr
whereon he dide,
As if ſhe too meant to be cr
fide.
I ſee her vaile rent; for it co
not be,
The Temple ſhould expr
more griefe than ſhe.
Me thinkes I heare her plaints
Chriſt that I
Should give thee fleſh; for elſe
could'ſt not dye!
Divinity is from all paſſion free,
That thou canſt ſuffer torments,
from mee.

Wh

herefore thy Virgin Mother here vowes all
er houres to prayers, till thy laſt trumpet call.

nd here I crave no pardon, if my penne
abbe thoſe preſumptuous, and o're curious men:
hoſe bold Diſputes dare into queſtion call
hat ſonnes ſhe had, and whether Chriſt was all.
s if a mortall durſt to *Mary* come,
nd court Gods widdow, to prophane her wombe,
s if the Mother Maide that ſtile gave ore,
o be a Mother, but a Maide no more,

Or

Or ſhe that God and man
borne, would be
A Mother now to beare Hu
nity,
As ſhe from heaven to earth,
thoughts had caſt,
And could love *Ioſeph*, that
God embrac'd.
No, having layne, great heav
immortall King,
Vnder the ſhadow of thy grati
wing:
She Turtle like would a ch
widdow be,
And vow'd to love no ot
Dove but thee,
But ever mourn'd thy abſence,
her eyes
Had ſpent her ſoule in teares, a
love-ſtrain'd cries,
Crackt her poore heart-ſtrin
Having caſt away

he toyleſome burthen of unwel-
dy clay,
ith pure, and ayrie pinions,
ence ſhe flies,
nd forſakes earth, to ſeeke thee
n the skyes.
hen ſhe arriv'd where her bleſt
Mate doth dwell:
hat Poets, Prieſts, or Prophets
age can tell
he entertainements, welcomes,
oyes have beene,
nleſſe in *Pathmos* he had Viſions
ſeene.
e may ſuppoſe that Angels
clapt their wings,
owers and Dominions ſhowted,
all the ſtrings
f Seraphins tun'd high, lowd
Hymnes did play.
troope of Virgins on the *Mil-*
ky way

Met

Met her in ſnow-white robes, and
Convoy had
Legions of Martyrs, all in ſca
clad.
Ioſuah with Captaines, *D*
ſainted Kings,
All tendred their reſpects.
Pallace rings
With acclamations, *Eve* ru
forth to ſee
Whence ſprung the fruit, cu
the forbidden tree.
Sarah makes haſte, her La
wombe to bleſſe,
Without whoſe birth, the c
of barrenneſſe
Had laine upon her, though
had a ſonne,
And had brought twenty *Iſa*
forth for one.
Rebecca with the better of
twins,

and *Rachel* with her *Ioſeph* too begins
To chant her praiſe. The brave Bethulian Dame,
Victorious *Iudith*, to her welcome came
With troopes of Amazons. The Sheban Queene,
Who now the new *Ieruſalem* had ſeene)
Runs to the ſight, and wiſtly gazeth on
The Mother of the mightier *Solomon*.
There met with Saints, and Angels, all deſire
To bid her welcome, thus, in a full Quire.

Come

Come bleſſed Virgin, fixe th
eyes upon
This glorious Thro
And on the right hand, th
behold thy Sonne.

Behold his hands, his feet,
pierced ſide,
That for us di
Whoſe very wounds in hea
are Deiſide.

Thoſe glorious lips, which o
drew milke from thee,
Shall one day
The doome of ſoules, to bliſſe,
miſery.

Ble

left wombe, the myſteries that
ſprung from hence,
Dazle our ſenſe,
Whoſe onely Eſſence is Intelli-
gence.

Finite thou wert, yet infinite in
thee
We treaſur'd ſee,
Mortall, yet Mother to Eter-
nity.

Thy Sonne made of thee, made
thee. Faith aſpire
One ladder higher,
Elder then's Mother, antient as
his Sire.

'Tis ſtrange thou ſhould'ſt bo
Maide and Mother be;
Stranger to
In one ſoule both God, and H
manity.

As hee was God, thou ſtill
Mayd. Who can
This wonder ſcan
Hee made thee Mother, as h
was but man.

Thou ſuckl'ſt him upon t
breaſts, and he
To ranſome the
Open'd his ſide upon his paſ
on tree.

Com

me blessed Virgin, and receive
thy Crowne
Of full Renowne,
where Death, and Time have
laid their Scepters downe.

There sing with us, how three doe
sit upon
The glorious Throne;
One of which three is two, yet
all but one.

THus, holy Virgin, have I
dow'd o're
Thy Picture in a rude unpol
ſcore,
That wiſh'd t'have limm'd it w
as lively grace,
As ever Painter drew the ſwe
face.
Yet would I not idolatrize
worth,
Like ſome, whoſe ſuperſtition
thee forth
In coſtly ornaments, in cloath
gay,
So rich as never in the St
lay.
Theſe make thy Statues now
famous be
For pride, as thou wert for h
mility.
I cannot thinke thy Virgin ba
fulneſſe

Wo

Would weare the Lady of *Lorettos* dreſſe,
Though farre more glorious robes to thee were given,
Meekeneſſe, and Zeale on Earth,
Glory in Heauen.

Take then the honour thou haſt juſtly wonne,
Praiſe above Angels, but below thy Sonne.

THE

Faults eſcaped in Printing.

PAge 74. *line* 4. *reade, glorious.* 1
in the margin, reade, not onely m
Moderne. 128. 14. *for it, reade, is.* 1
16. *for penurious, reade, poore.* 182.
Lambertus. 194. 14. *in ſtead of,*
reade, from. 205. 6. *Adelphonſus.* 213.
for conſent, reade, concent. 246.
Chriſts, r. Chriſt. 247. *for brought,*
broughtſt. 248. 11. *for ſilent, r. a ſil*
248. 13. *dele, but.*

This Blessed Virgin had the grace deuine,
To be deriu'd from IESSE's blooming rod.
And ryse elect from DAVID's golden line
To be the Daughter, Mother, Spouse of God

THE FEMALL GLORY:

OR,

The life of the Virgin MARY.

HIstory offers to our view, Myriads of holy Virgins in Beauty, and vertue equally attractive, whose due praise the Catholike Church doth at this solemnely sing, but with a

more elevated voyce (as duty o
our part, and merit on he
commands) the laud of that mo
excellent Princeſſe, the Virg
Mother of God. There be wh
affirme that what ever the Creat
ſaw beautifull in heaven, or ear
he beſtowed in the limming
this rare Piece, not that ſhe mig
be ſtiled the moſt faire among
the daughters of women, but by
heavenly prerogative, the alo
Faire, the alone Lovely. Loo
how many parts, ſo many arts y
might diſcerne of the Celeſti
Limmer. And this is no way r
pugnant to reaſon it ſelfe; for
Chriſt was faire above the ſon
of men, ſhould not ſhe be ſo abo
their Daughters, ſince from h
alone he received his fleſh? *G*
gory Nazianzen proclaimes th
ſhe ſurpaſs'd all women in love
neſſ

Her externall Beauty.

Galatinus.

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eſſe. *Andræas* ſayes that ſhe was a ſtatue carved by Gods own hand. Others of thoſe firſt, and purer times not without admiration, obſerve that God was almoſt fifty Ages in the meditation of the ſtructure of this ſtately Pallace. And truely our beliefe may eaſily digeſt this, that his omnipotency would make her fit to be the Mother of his Son, Empreſſe of this lower world, and the bleſſed Conduit through which ſhould paſſe the myſtery of mans Redemption. Yet finde I a ridiculous deſcription of her in *Epiphanius* a Prieſt of *Conſtantinople*, who affirmes that her Face was of the colour of Wheate, her viſage long, and her noſe ſutable, her haire yellow, and her eye-browes blacke. But what authority he hath for this, neither I, nor I thinke he himſelfe can

NOTE

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noſe ſutable, her haire yellow, and
her eye-browes blacke. But what
authority he hath for this, neither
I, nor I thinke he himſelfe can

well tell; for ſurely ſimple Antiquity was not either curious, or skilfull to deliver it by tradition or picture to poſterity. I verily believe he had it from his own dreames, or rather fancy. *Moy* is as much beholding to our incomparable, and inimitable *Sydney* for a delineation, as is my divine ſubject to this curious Impertinent. Whether her beauty chiefly conſiſted in colour, in Symmetry of parts, or both I know not: ſure I am the ſtreame of other more judicious, pious Authors carries me not into an opinion, but a ſtrong beleefe of her heavenly forme. Cardinall *Cajetan*, and *Galatinus*, (with what truth I cannot ſay) certainely with more probability then he, maintaine that her excellent temperature, her conformity of members,

her

her firme and conſtant Complexion free'd her from all contagion and diſeaſes. And *Dyoniſius* goes further, affirming that ſhe was no other then a walking Spring. Such variety of ſweet odours her very pores breath'd out on all that came neare her; as we reade of *Alexanders* living body, and the Ægyptian Carkaſſes which by a thin ſpare dyet obſerved in life, even after death ſent forth a moſt ſweet perfume. *Sylvanus Razzius* recounts a pleaſing ſtory of a certaine Clerke, who by many prayers implor'd, and obtain'd the bleſſing of her ſight, but with this condition, that he ſhould ſee her but with one eye, and that one he ſhould loſe. He willingly embrac't it, but when ſhe appear'd dreſt in all her Beames, not being able with one eye to take a full view

of her, he opened the other al chuſing rather to forfeit his ſig for ever, then to looſe one min of the inconceiveable content enjoyed in the ſight of ſo glorio a ſpectacle. Were this true, would make a brave example o devout ſoule raviſht with the vi of a divine object.

Her internall Beauty.

If the Inne was ſo ſplendent, ſumptuous, what may we thin of the amiable gueſt, that lodg'd it, her minde, beſet with though cleare, and radiant as her ow eyes? He that dares attempt t expreſſion of theſe her interna gifts is ignorant of her ſublimit he who dares not, knows not h humanity, her ſweetneſſe. As ſtile can aſcend ſo high as her e alted worth, ſo on the other ſi none can deſcend ſo low as h

Humilit

Humility. Encourag'd therfore by her meekneſſe, not my owne ſufficiencie, I ſhall endeavour to limme her ſoule in little (ſince in great neither my time, nor ability will let me) which will appeare an enterpriſe as hardy, and vaine as his who ſhould ſtrive to limmit the light, or circumſcribe the Ayre. Know then, modeſt Reader (and receive this knowledge with the ſame extaſie, and zeale I write it) that her internall luſter was farre greater then her externall, like in this unto the Tents of Kedar, as ſoone cover'd with duſt, and almoſt burned up with the heat of the Sunne, as ſoone beaten, and ſhaken with tempeſtuous weather, but in the meane time inwardly all glittering with glory, and magnificence. O ye Angels, to you it is onely given, not to ſinne, but on

her is conferr'd what you can
merit, to beare, and the reparati
of mans ruine. The Apoſtles, tho
holy Tapours of the primiti
Church ſometimes burnt dimm
and were obſcur'd with the fog
of ſinne, but her brightneſſe n
thing vitious could leſſen, mu
leſſe utterly extinguiſh. She wa
indeed, vertues prime, and gre
example, and all the accompli
women of the Ages paſt, preſen
or to come have grace, and ha
neſſe to the full in being called h
imperfect Coppies.

Here my Invention treads
Maze, and my heart is divided b
tweene an earneſt deſire to prai
her to the height, and a holy fea
leſt in that praiſe I ſhould trenc
on Gods own peculiar Attributes
That ſhe was no way inferiour t

er Sonne, according to the flesh, dare not with some avouch, who agnifie her in a phrase that vio-tes her modesty, and makes her lush at her owne exaltation. Her owlinesse was such that it was earer the rejecting of all com-endations then entertaining a omparison betweene her selfe, nd him to whom she had profes-ed her selfe an hand-maid. And o lesse is her shame, or rather, in-eed, her trembling when pennes rophanely prodigall ascribe that onour to her which is onely pro-per, and due to that Deity from which she received her grace, and eing. I will not, with *Lipsius* a-scribe as much to her Milke, as to er Sonnes Bloud. Neither dare I ide with those who averre that he is halfe of that sacrifice that ransom'd us, and Gods partner here.

here. Nor is my penne ſo impio
ly valiant as to juſtifie that G
made himſelfe the patterne, a
communicated to her by Gr
whatſoever hee had by Natu
Nor am I of his bold opinion w
ſayes, If man had never ſinned,
Chriſt ſhould have taken fleſh
honour her. Theſe men wo
have her in all things equall
Chriſt himſelfe. Neither her m
deſty, nor mine will admit of t
blaſphemous flatterie. I willing
allow her to be the veſſell, but
the fountaine of Grace. I am mu
taken with his Tenent who ho
that God made all things for t
uſe of Man, becauſe he would a
ply furniſh him with matter
nough to buſie his head, leſt
ſhould bee ſo audacious as to e
quire into his ſecrets, & encroa
upon his prerogatives. We ne

ot (thanks to his infinite oodneſſe) bee ſo dange-ouſly venturous, ſince he ffords us a large ſcope, nd ground enough ſafely o extol this his Favourite, econd to none that ever ore fleſh, either in her wne deſert, or his e-eeme.

To begin with her birth; t was miraculous, as it al-wayes falls out where Na-ure failes, and God ſup-plies, as he did here in *Anna* the bleſſed mother of this more bleſſed maid. And here by the way I muſt in-ſert an obſervation derived from Gods ſacred Word, that for the moſt part the children of ſterility are fruit-

Her Birth.

That Ioachimus *and* Anna *were her parents is an undoubted truth receiv'd by the Church, as wee find both in* Baronius *and Biſhop* Montacute *in his Booke called* Apparatus, &c.

fruitfull in ſanctity, and all g
works. *Samſon* was the ſonn
barrenneſſe, and kept the pe
in obedience. So was *Iſaac*,
gave precepts to the ſeed of *A*
ham. So was *Samuel*, and fore
the miſery of ſervitude to the I
iſh Synagogue. So was *Ioſeph*,
with his counſell govern'd all
gypt. So was our hallow'd ſubj
who brought forth the Sonne
glory. The ſlaves of the *Tyr*
rebelling againſt their Maſte
and having ſubdu'd them by a g
nerall conſent, decreed, that
amongſt them who the next m
ning could firſt diſcover the Sun
riſing ſhould be their King. O
of them of a more gentle diſpo
tion then the reſt, having hidd
his Maſter (by name *Strato*) fro
the others fury, ſecretly askt h
adviſe in this ſo important affair

ho bade him look into the Weſt;
r there he ſhould ſooner diſcern
e approach of the Sunne then
ey who ſought him in the Eaſt.
his wiſe counſell he obey'd, and
hile the reſt fixed all their eyes
the Eaſt, he from the higheſt
rt of the City, by his Rayes in
e Weſt, firſt diſcover'd his aſ-
nſion in the Eaſt. So in *Anna* (the
ppy mother of this wonder of
omen) being then in the occi-
ent, or ſet of life the prophetick
orld foreſaw the brightneſſe of
e dazeling light ſhe then teem'd
ith. At length the worlds greedy
xpectation was ſatisfied; and this
ynthia, this chaſt Starre was de-
vered of a Plannet farre greater,
nd brighter then her ſelfe; of
hoſe all gladding ſhine the firſt
an participated, and the laſt ſhal.
may as properly as dolefully call
them

them Plannets, ſince they ne
reſted, but were in perpetuall m
tion while in this lower orbe th
ran their fatall courſes, in whi
they were often clowded, ne
quite eclipſed. The day of
Nativity of this moſt perf
of Saints, I finde thus deſcrib
by *Nicolaus Vernulæus* a late W
ter, and a profeſſor of eloquen
The deſcription I onely inſert f
the elegancy; for I muſt conde
it as guilty of Levity and Van
and no way ſutable to the Ma
ſty, Gravity, and Modeſty of
our ſacred ſubject. *The Sunne, ſ
he, this day burniſht his face, the
ter to illuſtrate the world, and to
peare gracious in her ſight, who ca
ed in her breaſt a fire purer, and cl
rer than his owne Rayes. The ea
put on her freſheſt greene, and
flowers ſpread their dainty leav*

dmade a ſweet exchange of odours
th her, yet hung their heads to ſee
mſelves both in colour, and ſent ſo
re ſurpaſs'd. The trees advanc'd
ir curled heads, and compos'd their
kes within the Chriſtall ſtreames,
o ſeemed to dance after their owne
murmur. Amongſt the Beaſts their
ing layd by his fierceneſſe, and not
e of his ſubiects was found ſavage,
polluted that day. Then was the
verbe croſs'd; for the Worme be-
g trod on, would not turne againe,
ſt ſhe ſhould prove unlike her mee-
ſt Miſtreſſe. In the very bowels of
e earth, the minerals and the ſtones
ore pretious, aſſumed their quicker
arkes, as Emblems of her ſplen-
ur. The Ocean had not a wrinckle in
s face, thouſands of Halcions ho-
r'd o're his head, and his Tritons
ew ſo lowd, that their notes ſounded
e very bottome of the Deep. Within
his

his vaſt Dominions was no dif
that day; for the greater of the
forſooke their prey, and the ſm
ſwumme in that ſecurity, that
Sprat bearded the Dolphin, and
with the noſe of the overgrown W
The birds ſung their choiſeſt aires
fowles flew nearer the earth to
her, and their Towring Lord
Eagle brought his young ones
their eyes at this new borne Li
The ayre it ſelfe was like her, ge
and being inviſible, came to ſte
kiſſe from her cherry lips, ſoft
ſmooth as were his owne. The wi
(conceiving their ſilence would
pleaſe) kept themſelves within
dens; onely Zephirus was let loo
fanne the Pinke, and Violet,
play the wanton with the Roſe. T
farre Vernulæus. Of all things
ated man alone, to whom, be
ſicke, ſhe was to bring a ſovera

Antidote was found leaſt joyfull, eaſt gratefull. Yet were there ſome, no doubt, of Gratitudes children, who lay proſtrate before her, and did homage to their ſweeteſt Lady, who might better be called the Mother of the living, then *Eve*; ſince ſhe, like a Murdreſſe, gave her children death ere birth; and defaced thoſe Images whereon God had ſet his owne ſtampe. She was no wiſer than a poor Fly, who, enamour'd of the beauty of the flame, longs to try if it be as ſweet as faire, and is conſumed with her owne folly. Had our bleſſed one ſupplied her roome in Paradice, the forbidden fruit had, perchance, beene yet unaſted, and man uncurſed; for ſhe was altogether void of curioſity, proper to that weaker ſexe, and

the very bane of it. Our deare Princeſſe therefore was deſerve ly a Queene ere borne, receiv'd Crowne ſooner than ſight, a found her Throne ſeated upon t threſhold of life. And wh Crowne was ſhe preſented with Not one to compoſe which t Eaſt, and the Weſt joyned the treaſures, but a Crowne in t making whereof every vertue, a all the Graces had a hand. N did any vaine mortall place it i her ſacred Temples, but G himſelfe, who thought nothi too deare, nor omitted any o nament that might embelliſh th goodly edifice wherein himſel meant to reſide. Having thus dorn'd and honour'd her, plac'd her in this lower world f the good and admiration of a

for the converſation of a few. Though borne on earth ſhe lived here like a Native of Heaven.

Her infancy.

As we may gueſſe at the neatneſſe of a houſe by the entry into it: ſo we may judge of her lifes remainder by the very beginning. *Sabellicus* affirmes that * ſhe no ſooner ſaw the light, but ſhe ador'd the Creator of it, and lifted up her heart and eyes to the great Infuſer of all her incomparable excellencies. She lov'd God ere ſhe had ſeene man. The defect of her tongue could not hinder the operation of her ſoule, in which ere ſhe could ſpeake, ſhe acknowledg'd his unſpeakeable goodneſſe. In her Religion preceded the uſe of reaſon, and ſhe apprehended Gods mercies long ere

Sabellicus ſets downe how ſhee diſpos'd of every particular hour.

ſhe was capable of his nature, and wiſedome. Ere ſhe could utte holy words, ſhe made holy ſigns by which ſhe made knowne th ſanctity of her heart. The fir word ſhe learn'd to liſpe was *Jeho vah*. She ſent forth many a ſig for ſinne, not having committe any, and bewailed that of whic ſhe was utterly ignorant. Th rowling of the cradle put her i minde that ſhe was newly enter into the tempeſt of this life, th infinite dangers whereof to eſcap ſhe made Vertue her Pilot.

We will not here with ſom Writers of her Life, diſpute whe ther or no ſhe had the ſame ord nary Education with other chil dren; nor with them affirme th ſhe entred the Temple at thre yeare

yeares old, and lived close by the Altar, and was fed miraculously by an Angell; as also that it was there revealed to her that she should be deliver'd of the Messias. I will not make one steppe out of Gods own path, frō which I never yet saw the greatest wit to swerve, but it was in danger of sticking fast. Yet hath a pious charity often swallowed more than all this. If from the hand of an Angell she there received food naturall, or supernaturall, sure I am the wonder is not so great as that of the Incarnation, where the wombe included the Word. And why should we with difficulty beleeve that this white spotlesse soule was illuminated with Revelations by the divine object of her chaste vowes? who undoubtedly deserved to be

rapt up if it were possible, a story higher than was Saint *Paul*. It likely enough, saith *Mantuan*, God would have the Temple of his Spirit to dwell in the Temple of his service. The same Author affirmes that she there liv'd a pretty Nun, and Spunne, and wove the sacred Vestments till her eleventh or twelfth yeare, when her prudency, and shame, and the care of her Reputation, forbade her to accompany even the very Priests themselves, men whom God had selected out of the Masse of the vulgar to teach his Will, to instruct his people, and to sing his praise. These curiosities, and bold conjectures let us rather believe then contest with the broachers; for it is wisedome to grant what we cannot confute. Let us then imagin-

imagine that this holy Recluſe confined her body to this ſacred ſolitude, and a ſpare diet, and wakefully kept her ſoule from the ſurfets to which carnall delights invite all things humane. And it is conſonant both to reaſon and truth, that her exerciſe there, was ſerious like the place. They who goe about to take away her writing, and reading tongue are impiouſly ridiculous, ſince it evidently appeares that ſhe was well read in the Scriptures by her divine hymne uttered in *Zacharies* houſe. On her reading attended Meditation, on her Meditation Prayer, on her Prayer Action, as the louely fruit of the precedent. Thus

* *Ancient and eminent Authors affirme her to have beene learned in the Hebrew tongue, which you ſhall finde quoted in* Cedrenus.

busied, the day left her, the ni
found her. Her sleeping cogit
ons we may suppose were sutab
to her waking, and her v
dreames divine. She had no
thought that was her owne, all
long'd to God. She was slow
speake, saith *Sabellicus*, but re
to obey all holy advice. H
tongue was not so swift as
Wit, which made it follow
direction in all the requisites
speech. In a word, she might
usurpe that of the Church, *Wh*
was a little one, I was pleasing
most high. When upon ma
deliberation she left the Tem
she still liv'd as if she had be
in it. Though in body she was
ciable, she fetter'd her soule fr
wandring abroad, her true c
versation being in heaven. T

flouris

ni ourishing Vine planted her selfe
gi mongst the Olives. She was more
ta hoice of her company then of
ve er food, or rayment, both which,
no od knows, were course enough.
ll he knew temperancy to be Gods,
w nd Natures Favorite, in that it
re onduceth to the service of the
F ormer, and the preservation of
he later. She therefore made this
v eavenly vertue judge of her Ap-
es petite, left it should long after ex-
w esse, the mother of all unclean-
he esse. Her soule gave laws to her
body, which it could not infringe
n without the injunction of a strict
p ennance. She devour'd Gluttony
t selfe, and made the flesh subject
s to the command of the spirit. Her
f are, saith *Cedrenus*, required no
v essell, nor need she to wash her
hands after her greatest meale. Her

dyet

dyet defide the fire, as of no
From the Earths face, the Co
dugge, and the Fountains brimm
ſhe readily fetched her ſuſtinanc
She was as ignorant of the Perſ
luxury, as the ſuperſtition. To th
her cloathing was correſponde
for which her backe was behol
ing to her fingers. Her hands we
the purveyours to her other me
bers. She had one eye fixed
heaven, and the other caſt up
the earth, being intentive on t
Glories of the one, and the Nece
ſities of the other, and at once ad
ed *Martha*, and *Magdalene*. It is v
ry credible that ſhe ſowed, an
ſpunne, and maintain'd life wi
labour. Hee who gives life to a
things, ſuffer'd his then adopted
and ſince naturall mother, to gain
her living with ſweat, and care

her example might give pride
checke, and teach Majesty Hu-
ity. In her he made manifest
mortall felicity is not the pa-
of the immortall. She was not
itous for the feather, the look-
glasse, or any outward brave-
being onely carefull to cover
shame, and at once to expell
o deadly enemies to her soule,
body, pride, and cold. Her out-
rd simplicitie was in all things
swerable to her inward.

Her be-trothing.

Well, now she began to write
oman, and her fifteenth yeare
proached, and hand in hand
th the increase of time went the
quisition of all Graces. Her least
ffection would render another
ost accomplisht. In her all ver-
s were at strife, all overcame.
Nothing

Nothing was here meane, ſh
ing no other then an union o
perlatives. Charity, obedienc
etie, virginity, all were in h
height. Nothing in her was w
ing but the Deity it ſelfe. Ye
not her vaine-glory ſuch, th
deſired with *Dina* to viſit
daughters of other Regions,
to enlarge the renowne of t
her Excellencies, being onely
dious in the government of
owne little, inward comm
wealth. Her fixed reſolution
not onely to confine her per
but her fame, which (had it p
trated forreigne Countries) K
would have come ſuppliant
her cottage, and on their k
have petition'd for her love.
the bonds of her Matrimony w
already askt in heaven, and no
pedim

iment found why she might
wedde God himselfe. Yet at
earnest solicitation of the reve-
d Priests, saith *Mantuan*, was
content to be betroth'd to *Io-*
; not that he should do the of-
of an husband, but serve as a
re to the importunity of other
ours, that so she might the more
ly enjoy the inconceiveable
asure she tooke in her vowed
girity.

But

28. *And the Angel came in vnto her, and said, Haile thou that art Highly fauoured the* LORD *is with thee, Blessed art thou Among women.*

But now the time is come when *The salutation.*
e muſt be (to the aſtoniſhment
the world) a Mother, and yet
maine a Virgin. The marriage
tweene God, and Nature is con-
ed on in heaven, and *Gabriel*
Ambaſſador concerning mans
emption prepares himſelf for
ourney decreed from all eter-
y. He receives inſtructions from
hands of Gods owne tranſcen-
Mercy; and therefore, no
ot, but they are gentle, and
ſing. Clad in white, (as an
blem of his innocencie) he ſets
h without any other guard
his owne right Arme able to
oy Legions. The *Chaldæans*
ied in their Enſignes a towring
me, the Babilonians a Dove,
e Scythians Lightning, the Per-
ſians

ſians a Bow, and Arrows, the
mans an Eagle. And this extr
dinarie Ambaſſadour of pe
(being to deſcend from the hig
to the lower world, from the
atour to the creature, an Ange
men) beares along with him i
very name the ſigne of his Pow
and Fortitude that ſends him.
gates, ſaith *Vernulæus*, of the
ſtiall pallace ſtand wide open,
the ſacred Trinity gladly beh
the departure of this divine
ſenger. The Angels clap t
wings, and make the heave
roofe ring with Haleluiahs.
Saints attend, and ſend their vo
after him, that his preſence may
without terrour, and his ſw
delivery win conſent in the h
of their glorious Empreſſe.
vaſte ſpace betweene the Pole

lled with troopes of holy ſpirits, who give a convoy to this their ellow-ſervant graced above the eſt, in having ſo important an af-aire as the worlds ſalvation com-nitted to his charge. The Starres ut on new, and brighter aſpects, s ſeeming to foretell what they reſee not. The Earth bedeckt ith all imaginable ornaments reſents him with variety of ſents, nd colours even to her ſelfe new, nd layes her prime dainties under is feet. Onely her ſtupid Inhabi-nts, whom his Embaſſie moſt ncern'd, were altogether unſen-ble of his arrivall, and of the eter-all benefit he brings them, recei-ng him rather like an Herald en an Ambaſſadour. And (which creaſed his wonder at his enter-inment) his firſt approach was

unwelcome to the Saint who Votary he was. He found her (some thinke) alone, ſeparated well in body as minde from world. She was not ignorant piety was nearer pollution in ſo ety than ſolitude, and therefor ſhun infection, ſhe avoyded co pany. She well knew that the ly Ghoſt himſelfe had dwelt the Prophets and Apoſtles Caves, Dens, and Dungeons, there pen'd the all-ſaving W That which we call good fell ſhip, and ſweet converſation conſcience aſſured her to b beſt but a ſociable folly. In ne bourhood ſhe feared proxi in vice. Well, if alone he fo her, queſtionleſſe ſhe made vine uſe of that privacy, and m tated how in a corrupible bo

to preſerve a ſpirit incorruptible. The celeſtiall agent having demanded, and obtained audience, ſpake the oration he made not; for he was but Interpreter of the holy Spirit, in which office he juſtly gloried. The ſpeech aſſuredly was modeſt, and ſutable to the ſacred eares it was to enter. The beginning of it, no doubt, conſiſted of a reverent applauſe of the perfections God had imparted to her. *Haile Mary*, ſaid he, *full of Grace, the Lord be with thee: bleſſed art thou amongſt women, &c.* How ſhe tooke this the Text following declares. *And when ſhe ſaw him ſhee was troubled at his ſaying, and thought what manner of ſalutation that ſhould be.* No doubt the Angell no ſooner pronounc't, *Haile Mary full of Grace*, but a bluſh aroſe in her

bashfull face, and verified his words. But this colour was not fixed, it went quickly back to fortifie her noble heart against the feare that invaded it. She saw herselfe alone with one altogether stranger to her, whose face she neither knew, nor his intent. True it is, his language was smooth, and even, but as faire words as these have often proceeded from a foule heart. She trembled at his salutation, thinking him to be a * man

* *That the Angell appeared to her in the form or shape of a man is the opinion of* S. Hierome. in Epist. ad Eustoch. de cust. Virgin. *and of* S. Ambrose, lib. 1. offic. cap. 18. *that which* Damascen *hath*, lib. 2. de fide orth. *All the learned approve of; to wit, that the Angels are transform'd, and appear to men according to the pleasure of the Lord, and reveale his divine Mysteries. And that Angels appear'd in the old Testament in the shape of men is certaine: and for many reasons it is very probable that* Gabriel *assumed the form of a man when he came to the blessed Virgin.* Chrysologus serm. 140. *is of opinion that the Angel appeared* subj

n ſhape, and habit moſt pleaſing and gentle, and hat the Virgin was not troubled at his perſon, but iſpeech, in that it is ſaid ſhee marvelled what ſay-gs thoſe ſhould be.

ubject to abhorred Luſt, and herefore feared violence: but hen ſhe once knew him, and his mbaſſy, ſhe then undaunted, iſcours'd with him as an Angell, hom before ſhe quak't at as a an. I conjure all modeſt ſoules at ſhall peruſe this paſſage by all ings deare to them, to dwell ng upon it, as worthily deſer-ng both their admiration, and itation. Though ſhe received om him extreme and heavenly aiſes, yet ſhe was afraid, becauſe was alone. O Saviour of the orld! Purity feares an Angell, ll not Impurity then ſuſpect a

man though in the ſhape of a
Angell when his complement, an
diſcourſe are ſenſuall. Virginit
cannot bee too heedfull, whic
makes it practiſe the doubt
things ſafe, that ſo it may acc
ſtome it ſelfe to the feare
things dangerous. If heathen w
men have by nature ſo abhor
pollution, that they have chos
death before it, how odious m
we judge it to the Angellicall
nocency of Gods owne Mothe
Well, what courſe tooke sh
She rejected theſe his comme
tions not with her tongue, but
lookes, which put on a diſlike
all he had ſaid. She had heard th
when Caſtles come to a parley,
is a ſigne of yeelding, and the
fore thought it her ſafeſt way
involve her ſelfe within humil

nd a ſober ſilence. But the An-
ell quickly delivered her out of
is Agony into a greater; out
f this feare into a more tormen-
ing care. *Feare not* MARY, ſaith
e, *for thou haſt found favour with*
od; for loe thou ſhalt conceive in thy
umbe, and beare a Sonne, and ſhalt
all his name IESUS. *He ſhall be*
reat, and ſhall be called the Sonne of
he moſt high, and the Lord God ſhall
ive unto him the throne of his father
David. *And he ſhall raigne over the*
houſe of Iacob *for ever, and of his*
Kingdome ſhall be no end. To this
her anſwer was, *How ſhall that be,*
ſince I know no man? It is true, it is
rue, moſt bleſſed Virgin, thou
knoweſt no man; but let thy mo-
deſty reſt ſecure; for the operati-
on of God, and not of man is here
required. God ſhould never be

conceived in thee, wert thou no
a Virgin, nor borne of thee shou
dest thou not remaine such. Tho
canst not be spotted with the co
ception, or birth of an issue so im
maculate. This feare is as need
lesse as that of defiling thy faire
fingers with the purest fountain
If *Obededon* having received th
Arke within his walles, was so en
riched with all manner of Trea
sure, that Felicity was voyced t
have descended from heaven int
his house; what shall we judge o
thy supreme blisse, O glorious
Virgin! who art not to be the re
ceptacle of a wooden Arke, but o
his only Sonne? With confidenc
therefore consent to thy own
happinesse, and the Redemption
of all Humanity.

But, indeed, I do not wonder at
r aſtoniſhment, when I conſider
r baſhfulneſſe. Mee thinks I ſee
r now caſting her eyes up to
aven, now fixing them on the
rth, and now againe on the Am-
ſſadour himſelfe, reſolving to
ve up her ſoule rather then her
rginity. Harſh muſt the word
nception) needs ſound to her
ho was a votary nere to know
an, whoſe onely love was prayer,
hoſe onely childe was piety. But
hen the Angell urged Gods will,
r forthwith yeelded a handmaid
her Lords deſire. Let us inten-
vely liſten to the text. *And the*
ngel anſwer'd, and ſaid unto her,
e holy Ghoſt ſhall come upon thee,
d the power of the higheſt ſhall over-
adow thee; therefore alſo that holy
ing that ſhall be borne of thee ſhall
be

be called the Sonne of God. And beh
thy couſen Elizabeth, ſhee hath
conceived a ſonne in her old age,
this is the ſixt moneth with her
was called barren. For with God
thing ſhall bee impoſſible. And M
ſaid, Behold the handmaid of
Lord, bee it to mee according to
word. See here united an incom
rable humility, and an obedie
even unto death. For the conſe
ing to be the mother of God
not eaſie to her, in that a meek,
humble ſpirit with greater diffi
tie aſcends the higheſt ſtepp
Honours Throne, then a proud
ſcends thence to the bottome,
being a thing in nature farre ha
to climbe then to come downe,
any man ſhall yet reſt unſatisfi
and ſhall make a further enqui
after this difficulty, he may ple

conſider that her humility bal-
anc't her Sonnes exalted, and her
wne dejected eſtate; and as well
editated the care, the diligency,
e reverence, and obſequiouſnes,
the dignity, and excellency of
r whom God would vouchſafe
e moſt glorious title of Mother.
he wiſely weighed that the An-
els were not worthy to wait on
im, and therefore the ſervice of
r whole life muſt as farre ex-
ed, as the name of Gods Mother
id excell that of Servant, or An-
ell. If Saint *Peter*, yet in the dawn
f Grace, could ſo clearly diſcerne
is Maſters greatneſſe, as that he
ryed out, *Depart from me a ſinner*,
s deeming himſelfe unworthy of
is preſence: If the Centurion for
he ſame reſpect thought his houſe
oo baſe to receive him, what
ſhould

ſhould ſhe thinke who was not
take him into her ſhip, or her loc
ing, but into her wombe, where
was to remaine not a viſitant, b
dweller? Full well alſo ſhe und
ſtood that her conſent was
onely required to be the parent
the Almighty, but the Spouſe a
of his holy Spirit, to whoſe ins
rations ſhe ought a greater obe
ence then others, having receiv
from the ſame ſpirit a greater m
ſure of grace, and honour. S
clearly foreſaw that ſhe was
onely choſen to conceive the S
of God, to bring forth, to nur
and governe him, but alſo perfo
to yeeld him up (ſuch being t
divine pleaſure) to a three a
thirty yeares perſecution, and la
ly to the curſed death of t
croſſe, the ſalvation of others d

Many ancient Writers hold that ſhe had the gift of prophecie.

pendi

ending on his deſtruction. And hat ſhe did foreſee all this, plainly ppeares by the ſpeech of the Anell to her, who (after he had retold the conception, and birth f Chriſt) added, *And he ſhall be alled Ieſus*, that is, a Saviour. An wfull reverence, and an inconceiveable joy divided, without oubt, her all-holy heart when ſhe ontemplated her future being a mother to the Meſſias. Can a man magine any thing more difficult, more bitter for humane nature to overcome? Yet did her active verue vanquiſh all theſe impediments, and with an humble, raviſht oule ſhe expected the entrance of im into her ſacred wombe, whom ready ſhe had ſurely ſeated in er heart.

Here

Here before we proceed to
conception, we muſt obſerve
things not amply, and fully
nough expreſs'd, very remark
in the Angelicall ſalutation; F
the dignity of the Ambaſſado
next the worth of her to wh
his Embaſſy was directed, to
ther with her many vertues eq
ly eminent in this divine
logue.

Concerning the firſt; he was
a man, but an Angell; neither
Angell of an inferiour order,
of the ſupreme Hierarchy, wh
choiſe and pure ſpirits having
ceived infinite ornaments and g
ces from their Lord and Maſ
retained ſtill his favour, and e
ſtood before him. S. *Gregory* ſti
him a principall Angell, treati

Hom. 34 in lect. Evang.

principall things. Some have not feared to call him the ſupreme Angell, as *Damaſcen*, and others. Truth will anſwer for him, that amongſt all the celeſtiall ſpirits, none are ſo predicated in holy Writ as he, and *Michael*, to whom the Declaration, and Expoſition of ſo high Myſteries ſo often were committed, as in *Daniel*, *Zachary*, and *Mary* is ſpecified. Some will have his name to ſignifie God, and man, and that this Etymology containes a miraculous myſtery. Amongſt theſe is *Proculus* Archbiſhop of *Conſtantinople*. Geber, ſaith he, *ſignifies man*; El *God, alluding to his Embaſſy, which treated of his approaching birth, who was both God and man*. Saint *Bernard* judgeth the ſervant of *Abraham* to have beene a type of *Gabriel*; for he was ſent

Serm. de Virginis aſſump.

In 1 cap. Luc.

In parvis. ſerm. Gen. 24.

ſent by his Maſter not to ſeek a Virgin that came next to hand, but ſuch a one as the Lord God had prepared for the Sonne of the Lord. *This* Gabriel, *ſaith* S. Chryſoſtome, *the Painters preſent to us winged; not that God created him ſo, but to denote the ſublimity and agillity of the celeſtiall Nature, as alſo to admoniſh us that with thankfull hearts wee acknowledge him to have for our cauſe deſcended from the higheſt habitation.* And ſweet Chryſologus; *An Angell treated with* Mary *concerning our ſalvation, becauſe an Angell had dealt with Eve touching our damnation.* This bleſſed Spirit, and Saint *Iohn* the Evangeliſt, *Damianus* compares to two Lyons which carefully guard this our ſacred ſubject. I will not here ſeeke to ſatisfie the over curi-

Hom. de incomprehenſibili Dei natura.

Serm. 142.

Serm. 1. *de nat. Virgin.*

curious, and needleſſe doubts of *Luther*, and others, whether ſhe knew *Gabriel* to be an Angell, or no, nor whether or no he entred her chamber the doore being ſhut, nor whether he appear'd to her in a gentle familiar ſhape, or in his full ſplendour, as when he ſo much amaz'd *Zachary*, and ſtrucke him dumbe. Theſe queſtions ſerve rather to buſie curioſitie, then enflame zeale. Neither hath all that tender ſexe (to whoſe good I dedicate this diſcourſe) received an education that renders them capable Iudges of ſuch diſputes. And I freely acknowledge that in this treatiſe I have not ſo much as uſed any one word not frequent, and familiar, becauſe I would make the ſenſe cleare to the Femal readers. Withall I profeſſe my

ſcope is not to ſharpen their wits but to beautifie their lives, and to kindle in their faire boſomes a holy ambition to aſpire to the perfections of that devout life, which this our incomparable Lady led and ended with the applauſe of men, and Angels.

Laying aſide therefore theſe ſuperfluous arguments, I will proceed (as my method commands me) to deliver her ineſtimable worth, and ſober demeanour towards the Angell, which no eloquence can ſo well expreſſe as ſilent, and reverent admiration. Much I need not ſay of her whom I never can ſpeake enough, eſpecially having already produc'd ſo many ancient, and learned extollers of her excellencies,

which

which my vote would adde no more then a dimme lampe to the glorious eye of heaven, or an obscure gloworme to a ſtarry night. Yet ſince at the Altar of this meek one (ſweet and chaſt as the Incenſe there daily burned) a ſingle graine ſent from a ſimple heart is acceptable, I will not feare to pay her due oblation, though it come as short of her value, as I of her goodneſſe. May it pleaſe thee then, pious Reader, gratefully, with me to acknowledge that this is ſhe who gave fleſh to him by whom all fleſh is ſav'd. This was the Dove that firſt brought to us the Olive of our peace. This is the Rainbow, the firſt ſigne of our reconciliation with the divine Majeſty. And (to ſhut all in a little) this was the Tabernacle, and Throne of the Al-

mighty, whence (his Majesty ob-
scured) his love shined forth to a
humanity. But in that a plaine de-
livery of her vertues adorne he
more then can all the flowers o
Rhetoricke; I will (though in a
inelligant phrase) set such down
as shall appeare most eminent
this unparalell'd colloquy, wher
in were handled the profound my
steries of the sacred Trinity, as
the Fathers omnipotency, the ho
Ghosts efficacy, the Sonnes exce
lency, and in him the proprietie
both natures.

Her prudency.

Her Prudency shall take the fi
place, not as the greatest, but
the most diffusive, because clea
through this Dialogue it blen
with all the rest. First, she awfull
and advisedly gives him full aud
enc

nce, and at once both obſerves the laws of patience, and the cuſtome of good manners in quietly attending the period of his ſalutation. Many of her Sexe would have ſo cut him off at every word, that hee ſhould never have peec't his ſpeech together againe. Being more miſtreſſes of their tongues then their eares; they would never have given him hearing till they had beene weary of talking. One of theſe, *Iuvenal* makes mention of in his Satyre, who made a din ble to free the Moon from e power of the enchanter This vertue of an ortune ſilence few women

The common ſort when the Moone was eclipſed thought her to be enchanted, and with baſons and other things made a hideous noyſe to barre her from hearing the charmers voyce.

obtain, if they do, it comes to them the last of all other. Their tongues are clocks which, once wound up, few of them go lesse then sixteen houres. But this wisest of Saints a seasonable silence, and caution speech, was alike admirable: In much that through the whole Bible we finde not that she spake above five times. Twice to the Angell *Gabriel*, as *How shall this* and againe, *Behold the Hand-maid of the Lord.* Next in the encounter betweene her, and her cousen *Elizabeth.* A fourth time to her beloved Sonne after long absence, *Sonne, why have you dealt so with us.* Last when she becomes a petitioner for the poore, *Because they have no wine.* Here in this place she instructively hearkens to the Angell whom she heares twice ere she

Her opportune silence and caution of speech.

lyes once. She made two pawſes ther her anſwer, which ſhe fram'd with ſuch care, and ſobriety, as if Modeſty had ſeal'd up her bo-ſome, and lippes, and that without her ſpeciall warrant they were not to be opened. And though her thoughts were perplex'd and trou-bled, yet ſhe apparrell'd them in ſuch a cleare, ſmooth calme of lan-guage, that it would have genti-li'd Barbariſme it ſelfe. When her Chaſtitie is call'd in queſtion (which ſhe eſteemes above health, liberty, or life it ſelfe) ſhe poſitive-ly denies nothing in that ſtrange, and to her impoſſible aſſertion of the Angell, but anſwers with an humble enquirie, *How ſhall that be?* Well might ſhe make this demand, ſince ſhe knew by humane power it could not be effected, and the

Angell had not yet revealed, th
ſuch was the divine will. Thou
never ſoule endured a greater co
flict then hers, and that Feare h
ſtretched the ſtrings of her he
to their utmoſt extenſion, y
choſe ſhe rather that they ſhou
breake in ſunder, than ſhe into
temperancy. Some wom
(though chaſt, yet curſt, and
ſty) having once heard their c
ſtity brought in queſtion, wo
have omitted all interrogation
and have given the Angell a S
mon for his ſalutation, and h
reviled his name, if not offered
olence to his perſon. But in
ſweeteſt of creatures, milden
and modeſty kiſſed each other;
that nothing could flow from
that was not pleaſing and gent
Yet could not her amazed look

co

conceale her feare, which afflicts more than griefe; for we grieve onely for what is paſt, but feare all that can happen. The mercifull Angell reading in her forehead the perplexity of her minde, reſolved preſently to ridde her of the tormenting doubt ſhe was in, and to baniſh Feare out of that Face reſerved only for Beauty, and the Graces to dwell in. He therefore hides this great ſecret no longer from her, but expounds to her the manner and meanes of her conception, which no ſooner entred her eares, then conſent her heart; and with a proſtrate ſoule ſhe made her will conform it ſelfe to Gods; *Behold, ſaith ſhe, the handmaid of the Lord, &c.* In this conſent of hers we may diſcover almoſt as many perfections as words

words. Some draw hence an
ſervation, that the ſalvation
mankinde depended upon
conſent, and conſequently
damnation upon her refuſall.
meditation dares not climb
high, not being able to conce
how poſſibly the ſearcher
hearts ſhould receive a rep
from his choſen one, nor how
omnipotency can be confined
one onely meanes in the Rede
tion of mankinde. It ſhall ſuf
me to derive hence three of
greateſt Chriſtian Vertues,
Faith, her Obedience, her Hu
lity.

Her Faith. Faith is the hand whereby
lay hold on Chriſt, and his
rits, without which, ſaith S. *Au*
all morall vertues whatſoever

better than gorgious ſins. The
nity and neceſſity of this ſuper-
naturall gift cannot but evidently
peare to the meaneſt underſtan-
ing, in that no man is ignorant
t without Chriſt we cannot be
ſav'd, and without Faith we can-
not apprehend Chriſt, nor apply
his deſerts, and paſſion to our pol-
luted ſoules. In this which excells
all other perfections did this hap-
py Mother of our *Emanuell* ſur-
paſſe all other creatures, as here in
briefe, and hereafter more at
large I ſhall demonſtrate. S. *Au-*
guſtin both in knowledge and autho-
rity infinitely exceeds me, and
therfore I deſire you would heare
him for me. *Strengthened by a ſin-*
gular Faith, ſaith he, ſhe made Gods
ſeruants hers, more happy truely in con-
ceiving Chriſt in her minde, then his
fleſh

Lib. de ſanct. Virg. cap. 3.

flesh in her wombe. Endued with
faith she fear'd, and reverenc'd
whom she bore, whom as soone as
brought forth she ador'd, and wa
first beholder of the glory of his re
rection. Would I muster up
forces I could produce many
ther Champions of the sa
worth and antiquity, that with
indefatigable zeale, doe vindic
the faith of this blessed Virgin
gainst some of these latter ag
who accuse her as defective in t
wherin she was most accompli
Their objections have beene lo
since answer'd by Saint *Aus*
Saint *Ambrose*, and divers oth
of those Primitive times. Saint *A*
stin distinguisheth thus betwe
Lib. 16. de civit. cap. 24. *Zacharies* demand and hers. *Z*
chary when he sayes, Whence shall
know this? or, By what meanes shall

ow this, I, and my wife being ſo a-
e he ſpoke this out of deſpaire, not
the way of inquiſition. But Mary
en ſhe askes; How ſhall that be, ſince
know no man? ſhee utter'd this
quiring, not deſpairing. Where-
re to Zachary *it is ſaid, thou ſhalt*
dumbe becauſe thou believeſt not;
t to her the cauſe is expounded,
auſe while ſhe doth queſtion, ſhe
ubteth not of the promiſe. And to
e ſame purpoſe, and almoſt in
e ſame words ſpeakes Saint
mbroſe, whoſe teſtimony I o-
it, leſt I ſhould prove tedious,
nd obſcure to the tender ſexe, to
hoſe profit this weake Eſſay of
ine is chiefly intended. Yet my
eale to her whoſe true admirer I
n, compels me briefly to deface
l thoſe aſpertions, which the
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flesh in her wombe. Endued with faith she fear'd, and reverenc'd whom she bore, whom as soone as brought forth she ador'd, and wa first beholder of the glory of his re rection. Would I muster up forces I could produce many ther Champions of the fa worth and antiquity, that with indefatigable zeale, doe vindic the faith of this blessed Virgin gainst some of these latter ag who accuse her as defective in t wherin she was most accompli Their objections have beene lo since answer'd by Saint *Aug* Saint *Ambrose*, and divers oth of those Primitive times. Saint *A stin* distinguisheth thus betwee *Zacharies* demand and hers. *Z chary when he sayes, Whence shall know this? or, By what meanes shall*

Lib. 16. *de civit. cap.* 24.

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m, compels me briefly to deface
ll thoſe aſpertions, which the
verſaries to her, and piety have
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layd upon her. And I am who transform'd into wonder as oft consider how malice, and ſpawne can bee ſo frontleſſe groſſely to deprave the mean of the Text onely to detract fr her, and ſhould be ſo audacious to contradict the holy Ghoſt hi ſelfe, who by the mouth of *Eli beth* pronounceth her bleſſed, cauſe ſhe beleeved. True it is, th expoſitions give a light to Scriptures, but it is ſuch a one we receive from lightning, wh brings with it rather terrour th comfort.

Her obedience.

Here her obedience calls up me to cut off, I cannot ſay, this greſſion, but vindication of her h nour. Though ſhe deſerved ſov rainty, and command, yet deligh

she in nothing more then in this
missive vertue proper onely to
subject, and was a diligent pra-
tioner of it through her whole
e in imitation of him who was
edient even to an ignomini-
s death. Her faith, and obedi-
ce were of equall speed; for she
sooner heard the Angell relate
t the Almighty had ordained
e should beare the worlds Re-
emer, but she beleev'd, and con-
ced that it should be so. She had
mt in her infancy, that obedi-
ce with God is better then sacri-
e, and therefore she was as swift
thought in agreeing to the di-
ne ordinance, that so posteritie
ght distinguish betweene her o-
dience, and that of others whose
ils, and Vnderstandings have a
nbat before they can bee
brought

brought to a consent. But this
onely a lovely branch of that be
tifull tree, her humility, on wh
a perpetual Autumne attended;
it continually bore fruit.

Her humility.

Of this Vertue I must treat m
at large then of the rest, becaus
is extensive cleane through all
actions of her life. Of this there
many sorts, whose severall co
tenances, and shapes we will h
draw to the life, lest the Reader
impos'd upon, and verily belee
he enioyes the true one, when,
deed, he is onely possessour of t
adulterate.

Natural humility

We will begin with the Natura
Humility, which is to be found
many, who being basely borne, a
bred, and poorely spirited, aspir
no

ot to greatneſſe, but reſt fully ontented with that ſordid calling ortune hath allotted them. This umility is none of thoſe that ver-ue doth warrant. There is another inde which we may call ſenſuall, nd this makes men refuſe ho-ours, not that they do not deſire hem, but for the trouble, care, and anger that attend them. This umility is baſe, and degenerate. here is a third proud one of the ypocrite, who though he be am-itious of dignities, and ſeeks them y all cunning, and undermining ayes, yet (to be reputed humble) e ſeemes to flie them. This Hu-ility is falſe, and fained. A fourth here is philoſophicall, and morall, nd this conſiſts in the knowledge f a mans ſelfe, and his miſerable ondition, ſo that by a naturall

Senſuall humility

Hypo-criticall humility

Philoſo-phicall humility

light he can ſee to humble him-
ſelfe, and be ſerviceable to
men, yet no further then the dig-
tie of his eſtate allows, and huma-
reaſon requires. So that in
mans opinion it ſhould not be
mility, but baſeneſſe in a Gent-
man to pardon an injury done him
or to place himſelfe in an Hoſpital
as a ſervant to attend the ſicke, a-
needy. This Humility will not
dure the Chriſtian Teſt. A fift
Moſaicall, or Iudaicall, offers
ſelfe to our conſideration; and
hath a neare reſemblance of
true one; for by the peruſall of
written Law we come to know
ſelves more perfectly then all
Philoſophers of the world
teach us. To this purpoſe Sa
Paul ſaith; *From the Law comes*
knowledge of ſinne: and in anoth-
plac

Moſaicall, or Iudaicall Humility.

lace, *I had not knowne concupiſcence to bee a ſinne had not the Law ſaid, thou ſhalt not covet*. In this Mirrour we diſcerne our originall corruption, and all our diſordinate paſſions, and affections, together with our ignorance, and frailty. By this touchſtone we finde all our morall philoſophical vertues to be but counterfeit. But this carries with it very detrimentall diſcommodities; for it leads us beyond hope of ſalvation, and there leaves us. For when a man ſhall conſider that an unattainable perfection, and an exact obſervance of the Law is required at his hands (wherein he is commanded to honour God with all his ſoul, and with all his might, and to love his neighbour as himſelfe) and yet withall ſhall diſcover in himſelfe an utter diſabilitie

to execute these holy comman
a frozen dijection wil so benum
all his thoughts that not one
them will be of force to upho
it selfe from sinking into the bo
tomlesse pit of despaire.

The true Christian Humility.

But with the true Christian H
militie it is otherwise which (
ving first made a submissive a
knowledgement of its owne ing
titude, pride, avarice, injustice,
pietie, and infinite other imperf
ctions) by a strong apprehensio
layes hold on the mercie of G
in Christ. And this goodnesse
God towards us makes our sinn
more odious even in our own eie
no otherwise then the tender kin
nesse of his Father made the pr
digall childe more clearly see h
owne errour, and disobedience. F

is makes that ſpeech of God to e Iewes, *When you come into the nd of promiſe, then you ſhall know r ſinnes?* as if he ſhould have id, *How often have you diſtruſted e, and not onely murmur'd againſt e, but abandon'd me, and ador'd ls, making them your guides, and ributing to them the benefits you ve received from me?* ſo the re-enerated Chriſtian being once ered into the ſpirituall King-ome of Chriſt, ſees more cleare-his ſinnes, then he did before s calling, as having received a eater Light. The excellency of is vertue in a Chriſtian is be-nd humane expreſſion. Not a-iſſe a learned Father of the hurch ſtiles this the Treaſurer all other vertues. The antient hriſtians commonly uſurpe Hu-

Hieron. in Epiſt. ad Celant.

mility for vertue it ſelfe. Chr
cals it pooreneſſe of Spirit, a
diſcourſing of mans Beatitu
ſets it in the Front. This a
Pride are at endleſſe odds;
this is ſociable, and loves co
pany, wheras pride affects ſolitu
and is for the moſt part alo
In the Empire of Pride, two c
not ſtand quietly together, whe
as in the dominions of Humili
an infinite number may be pla
without either combat, or ſtri
Pride is never void of feare, a
doubt, whereas this ſtands ſec
with *Ionas* in the bottome of t
Sea. Pride is ever ambitious of
firſt ſeate, this of the loweſt, a
therefore is as much extoll'd
all men, as the other cride dow
Pride aſſumes all to it ſelfe, and
full of ſelfe-love. This refuſe
eve

en its owne due, and underva-
es it ſelfe, as knowing that it can
ſtly call nothing its owne, but
ne. Pride ſtormes at an injury
ceiv'd; this embraceth all occa-
ons that may exerciſe its pati-
nce. Pride (like all things puft up,
d light) is wavering, and blown
re and there by every guſt of
ortune; this in ſtability is a rock,
ot in hardneſſe, being ſoft, and
hite as the Downe of Swans.
et though this Vertue be of all
ther the moſt innocent, and ſub-
miſſive, it is withall the moſt po-
werfull; for, as nature, ſo God ab-
hors vacuity, and therefore (fin-
ding the humble utterly empty of
ffectation, preſumption, and
what elſe is derogatory to his ho-
nour) hee fils him with his
race and ſpirit. What ſhould I

ſay more? Humility is fearele
in danger, free in bondage, rich
poverty, quiet in perſecution,
ble, and gloriorious in ignomi
lofty in lowneſſe, joyfull in
guiſh, and happy in the midſt
miſery. This made *Moſes* ſpee
leſſe, *Abraham* to acknowle
himſelfe duſt and aſhes, *Iohn*
Baptiſt to eſteeme himſelfe a m
Voyce, and Saint *Paul* to acco
himſelfe the greateſt of all ſinn
This Iewell was ſo faire in Chri
eye, that to purchaſe it, he und
went not only poverty, miſery, a
all indignities, but even execra
on, and maledi&tion. What wou
we judge of a great Prince, wh
in ſtead of enlarging his Terri
ries, ſhould abaſe himſelfe ſo fa
as to become a poore ſubject
Why this did Chriſt, who (bein

of all things the greateſt, and beſt (from all eternity) by humility became of all the loweſt, and deſcended even to the profeſſion of ſervice to the meaneſt of his creatures. It is alſo an evident marke of his humility, that he choſe to be borne of ſimple and obſcure parents, whereas he might, if he would, have allyed himſelfe to the greateſt Princes. This gave occaſion to the Iewes to mocke him, ſaying, *Is not* Ioſeph *his Father*, and Mary *his Mother?* True it is that he was of the Houſe of *David*, but when he was borne, it was in its declination, and of no repute. As the Moone fourteene dayes together, to our ſight, encreaſeth, and fourteene againe diminiſheth, till at length it be ſeene no more: ſo in the fourteene generations

rations from *Abraham* to *David*, the Houſe of *David* received a vancement in honour, and ſple dour, and was in his time at t full height; but in the fourtee following generations it was the wane, and in the dayes Chriſt neere utter extinction. A whereas he might have inſer *Sarah*, *Rebecca*, and many othe Saints in his Genealogy, he plac *Tamar*, *Raab*, *Ruth*, *Berſabe*, and thers of an inceſtuous race, to ſh the world, that, though he ha ſinne, he abhorred not ſinner What man is there who, having laſcivious wife detected of who dome will take her againe? Y Chriſt, having eſpouſed the ad terate ſoule of man, receives h into grace and favour after hath committed millions of ad

teries

eries. To this effect ſaith the Pro-
het, *Though thou haſt committed*
fornication with many Lovers, yet re-
turne, and I will receive thee. Who
there that being injur'd will not
onely forgive the Offendor, but
ſeeke his friendſhip, I, and lay
downe his life for him? All this
did Chriſt, who (being grievouſly
and hainouſly abuſed by man) not
onely demanded his pardon, as if
he himſelfe had beene faulty,
but made an oblation of his owne
heart-bloud to quench the wrath
of God juſtly conceived againſt
him. Another admirable act of
his humility was, that (God ha-
ving given him all power in hea-
ven and earth, in ſo much that he
could at his pleaſure have deſtroy-
ed *Iudas*, whoſe treaſon he fore-
knew) all the revenge he tooke,

was

was to waſh his feet, and to ca[illegible] re
him Friend when he came to ap[illegible]s de
prehend him. To theſe I may add[illegible]wine
his living in obſcurity from h[illegible]ſion
twelfth to his thirtieth yeere, [illegible]ere
all which time we reade not an[illegible]ay w
thing of him. I will conclude wi[illegible] fol
all the croſſes and calamities h[illegible]rece
endur'd, of which in his life he [illegible]ilde
ver reaped any fruit, and at h[illegible]re
death had his Innocency one[illegible]quall
predicated by one, and that one [illegible]natc
Thiefe. In a word, during his [illegible]orar
bode here below (whether yo[illegible]tain
conſider his Doctrine, Actions, o[illegible]dare
Paſſion) he was not ſo much de[illegible]orar
lighted with the exerciſe of any[illegible]pe
vertue, as of this gentle, meek one, [illegible]enc
that ſo he might imprint it as his [illegible]ecv
owne ſacred ſtampe, or marke i[illegible]aur
thoſe mindes which he would [illegible]me
have known to be his. And, above [illegible]fa
the

reſt, into the chaſt boſome of
s deareſt Mother did he ſend this
vine gift, before his birth by in-
ſion, and afterwards engrafted it
ere by example. And this we
ay well perceive by her ſo cloſe-
following the patterne that ſhe
ecedes all but himſelfe in this
ilde, offenceleſſe vertue. In this
re quality as ſhe had an une-
ual'd Maſter, ſo ſhe prov'd a
atchleſſe Schollar. He who is ig-
orant of the excellency ſhe hath
tain'd to in this one perfection,
are pronounce him withall ig-
orant of Gods holy Writ, and in-
peable of all goodneſſe derived
ence. Yet ſome ſacrilegious
eves there are, who robbe this
autifull Temple of its prime or-
ment, this ſweeteſt Garland of
faireſt Flower. They maintaine

Her humility.

(me

(me thinks the earth ſhould ſhu
it ſelfe, and them when they un
it) that ſhe was humbled, not hu
ble. Theſe I may more proper
averre to be learning, not learn
They may with as much juſti
deprive the Roſe of her bluſh, t
Lilly of her white, the Violet
her purple, and the Chriſtall of
clearneſſe, as her of this pretio
ornament, which ſhe obtein'd by
ſtudious pious imitation, and p
ſerv'd with a holy care. But
wonder is the leſſe when I conte
plate the continuall Antipathy
tweene Impudency, and Innoce
cie. Whoſoever ſhall ſettle his
ditation on her diſcourſe with
Angell, her pilgrimage to her co
ſens houſe, and her divine Hym
there (though he have ſworn hi
ſelfe the ſlave of prejudice) he w
brea

reake his chaine, and reaſſume ſo
uch freedome as to declare her
uly humble. Sure I am if they
ould have her halfe a degree
umbler, they make her wholly
bject. To my thinking theſe ſixe
ords alone (Behold the hand-
aid of the Lord) are able to con-
ince of errour ſix thouſand ſuch
allow Authors. To thoſe who
plac'd in an extreame height, all
ings below ſeeme farre ſmaller
n indeed, they are, but to them-
es they appeare the ſame; but
it fals out otherwiſe, where
introducer of one pregnant
ing that contein'd all other in-
the world (and therefore wor-
y placed above it) thinks all
ngs under her farre greater then
elfe, and above her in value.
rtainly all the ancient Fathers
with

with one consent affirme that she deserv'd to be Empresse of all others, who humbled her selfe below them all. For my owne part, I am so transported with the meditation of her meekenesse that me thinks I heare her thus expressing the humility of her sanctified heart to the heavenly Nuntio.

Is this a delightfull dreame, or pleasing vision that thus ravisheth my soule? What a lovely prospect is this! What do mine eyes behold? Cedars stooping to shrubs? Mountains to vales lies? The Ocean courting a Rivulet. I discover more then all this. I see Heaven descending to Earth, the soveraeme Majesty to humane misery, a blessed Angell to a wretched mortall creature. True it is I am the structure of God's owne hands, but an edifice not cleane

not faire enough for the habitation of his onely Sonne. Alas, alas! I am a veſſel too uncleane to encloſe a Deity. Is this fleſh of mine pure enough to the purity it ſelfe? I am not worthy to be reputed his childe, much leſſe his ſervant. Oh lend me thy harmonious muſe, thy heavenly Rhetoricke, thou celeſtiall Oratour, that I may render him thanks, and praiſe; though not equall, yet nearer to the grace I have received. I deny not but wee ſee his name written in every thing here below, but in obſcure Characters, like the diſcovery of the Sunne in a puddle. Thou art nearer him in eſſence, in preſence, in goodnes, in knowledge, and canſt finde out words more ſuiteable to his worth. Wherefore I earneſtly beſeech thee in thy beſt phraſe to preſent the unfained gratitude of his moſt humble Hand-maid, who eſteems

her ſelfe unworthy to touch, much more to conceive him. Neither ſhalt thou thy ſelfe depart without many humble thanks for the eternall honour thou haſt done me by this viſit.

It is probable enough ſhe ſaid much to this purpoſe, this forme of ſpeech being agreeable to her diſpoſition, and demeanour. To conclude this point, ſix cleare demonſtrations of her Humility eminent above the reſt, the holy Writ offers to our ſerious, and reverend conſideration. The firſt in this ſubmiſſive conference with the Angel. The ſecond in the houſe of *Zachary*, where the more her vertue is predicated by her couſen, the more ſhe humbles her ſelfe. The third in her delivery where ſhe meekly ſubmitted her

ſelfe to all wants, and inconvenien-
ces. The fourth in her Purificati-
on, when ſhe obſerv'd the cuſtome
of other uncleane ſinfull women,
and rankt her ſelfe with them. The
fifth in betrothing her ſelfe to a
Carpenter, and in paying as great
an obedience to him as ever wo-
man did to husband, and in joy-
ning with him in labour to get a
poore living, to maintaine them-
ſelues, and their Sonne. The ſixth
in having a care of the poore, and
in aſſociating them at all times.
But of all theſe I ſhall treate more
at large in the courſe of this divine
ſtory, whoſe order now brings me
to the myſticall conception of her
bleſſed Sonne, our onely Lord,
and Saviour Ieſus Chriſt.

The heavenly Ambaſſadour ha-

ving executed his great Maſters command, departs, leaves God and Man in the wombe, and the Sonne of Righteouſneſſe is now riſen in the virginall orbe. For this is the * tenent of the true, and ancient Catholicke Church, that ſhe conceiv'd immediately after the Angels ſpeech, whom I had rather follow, then accompany many of theſe later times who oppoſe it. I will onely produce a few teſtimonies, and that of *Gregory* the great ſhall be the Leader. *The Angell*, ſaith he, *declaring, and the Spirit approaching, inſtantly the Word is in the wombe, and preſently in the wombe the Word is made fleſh, the incommutable eſſence coeternall to him with the Father, and the holy Ghoſt ſtill remaining*. Him ſecondeth Saint *Auſtin*, of all the Fathers the moſt ſubtle,

* *This point is much cõtroverted, and I leave it to the diſcreete Reader what to beleeve.* Lib. 18. Moral. ca. 27.

DeSymbol. ad Catechum.

ubtle and ſollid. Theſe enſuing
re his owne words. *When the An-*
ll ſaluted the Virgin, then did the
y Ghoſt make her fruitfull, then
d that woman conceive a man with-
t a man, then was ſhee repleniſht
ith grace, then ſhee receiv'd the
rd, that hee might be in her who
ade her. And in another place he
riteth thus. *Make no delay, O Vir-*
n, ſay but the word ſpeedily to the
eſſenger, and receive thy Sonne,
ve thy Faith, and feele the vertue
it. Behold, ſaith ſhe, the Handmaid
the Lord, be it to me according to
word. Here was no delay at all, the
ine Agent returneth, and Chriſt
rs the Virgin all wombe. The mo-
r of God is ſuddenly made fruit-
l, and is predicated happy through-
t all ages. She preſently conceived
Divinity of the Word without the

Serm. 2. infeſto Annun. Domin.

fellowship of a man. In this celebr
tion of the Nuptials betwee
God and nature, while my affect
on advanceth one steppe, my rev
rence retires another. Here Re
son is transformed into Admira
on, Eloquence into silence. Som
are rather solicitous to search in
the profundity of the Myster
than humbly to acknowled
it, and by Reason seeke to pry
to that which excludes all reas
What was before time it selfe,
believed, not comprehended
man; for that transcends the
derstanding of man which
before his nature. No eyes
those of Faith, can penetrate
Wonder. All things in God
above reason, nothing abo
Faith. Here a Virgin concei
without the losse of Chastity

This conception was predestinated before Time, from all eternity.

Ma

Maide remaines an immaculate Mother. Eternity is here encompaſs'd by time, glory masked in miſery. A thing finite containes Infinity, a mortall encloſeth eternity. Here the Sonne is as antient as his Father, elder than his Mother, and is made of her whom he made. Here is a concurrence, or a congregation of Miracles. It is a miracle that in the forming of ſuch, and ſo great an iſſue the aide of man ſhould be utterly excluded, and that as he was man, he was onely made of the pure bloud of the Virgin. It is a miracle that the ordinary number of dayes required in the forming of a humane body is not here obſerv'd, but in every moment without ſucceſſion of time a body is fram'd, and animated. But a greater miracle than

all theſe is that at the ſame inſtan
wherein the ſoule is joyned to th
body, the Divinity and Humani
ty are united in one perſon, and
the eternall Word is inſeperably
linkt with the fleſh; ſo that th
Son of God and man is the ſame
in the Virgins wombe. As for th
manner of her conception, I do
not more mervaile at the ſuper-
natural ſtrangeneſſe of it, then I
doe at the daring inquiſition, and
ſenſuall expreſſion of ſome, who
relate it in words as groſſe as their
owne underſtandings. I only wish
I could free the moſt learned, and
ingenious *Eraſmus* from the juſt
imputation of a laſcivious folly in
the Eſſaying to unfold this ſacred
Myſtery. He compares God to a
Woer, the Angell to a ſollicitour
and *Mary* to the beloved, and pro-
ceeds

ceeds further than either the divine Will, or humane modesty permit. He treates of this venerable, this stupendious encounter betweene the Divinity and Humanity in the same amorous phrase with which the Poets describe the wanton meeting of *Dido* and *Æneas* in the Cave. I will not rip up the particulars in which he is faulty this way, lest I runne into the same errour which in him I reprehend, and imprint a blush on the cheekes of my bashfull Readers. This conception was as spotlesse, and as cleare from all pollution as is a sweet Odour when it enters the sense. *Here, saith Saint* Austin, *the Word is the Husband, the Eare the Wife, in this glorious splendour is the Sonne of God conceiv'd, in this purity generated.* Of the same cleare,

Erasm. in Annotat. Lex in Appendice ad Antapologiam Sutoris.

Serm. 11. in natal. Domini.

[illegible] de [illegible] [illegible] sancti. cap. 9.

cleare, and cleane ſenſe is *Rupertus* on this very paſſage. *When the truely believing Maide*, ſaith he, *opening at once her minde and mouth ſaid, Behold the Handmaid of the Lord, be it to me according to thy Word; in the very inſtant (to make good the words of the Angell) the holy Ghoſt came upon her, and enter'd through the open dores of her Faith. What part did he enter? firſt the Chappell of her chaſte boſome, then the Temple of her holy and incorrupt wombe: Her boſome that ſhe might be made a Prophetess, her wombe, that ſhee might become a mother.* Now for the time of this conception, whether or no it were preciſely on the 25. day of March I will not ſtrive to chaine any mans beleefe to a reſolution herein, though I finde many old and great Doctors of the Church

hav

have held it for a truth. Many questions here arise which I have neither time, nor desire to discusse. I will onely looke into the deportment of this incomparable creature after that she knew she was become the receptacle of a Deity. The meere apprehension of such an unheard of honour in other women, would have begotten pride, arrogancy, and disdaine, not onely of all their sexe, but of mankinde it selfe. They would have repin'd at their breathing of common ayre, and (scorning the earth they trod on) have nourisht an ambition to walke on the battlements of heaven. But this Maide above imagination excellent, the more she was grac'd and dignified, the more she was humbled. When all men admir'd, and

even

even ador'd her, and judg'd he
worthy to be presently assume
into heaven, she was ready t
creepe into the center of the earth
and there to hide her, thinkin
that every one pointed at her, a
undeserving that supreme dignit
confer'd on her by God himself.
And whereas others would hav
studied nothing but rich Tissues
and embroyderies to weare, an
the most costly Persian Carpet
to tread on, she meditated simpli-
city in apparell, and a good paire
of shooes to beare her afoot jour-
ney over the steepe and flinty
mountaines, intending to bestow
a Visit on her cousin *Elizabeth.*

Many

And Mary arose in those dayes, and went into the Hill Country &.
And entred into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elizabeth.
And it came to passe, that when Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her wombe.

Her visitation.

Many of her kinde, and in her high eſtate, and condition would hardly have acknowledg'd, or receiv'd their kindred, much leſſe have trotted over hils, and dales to make a tender of their duties to them. Here is a rare ſpectacle, Humility climing, a thing as contrary to the nature of it, as it is for things ponderous of themſelues to flie. This ſoveraigne of her ſex having the celeſtiall Monarch included in the narrow compaſſe of her wombe, made haſte to paſſe thoſe ſteep, ſtony, and rugged hils with the willingneſſe of her minde enabling the feeblenes of her body. And, to ſay the truth, whether ſhould ſhe (whoſe worth exalted her above all things elſe) go to places as eminent in ſcituate

as she in sweetnesse of disposition? Whither should this Eagle flie, but to the summity of the world? Sure I am she could not sore above the pitch of her owne value. Shee forsooke the sweet embellisht valies, where with ease she might have walked, and betooke her selfe to the craggy mountaines, which not without infinite labour, and value she could ascend. By these rough, and uneven wayes, have the holy Martyrs themselues mounted the promontory of vertue, and have found the end of their journey as sweet as their travell bitter. *vertue the minds that travell to thy bodies how rich they returne! They come backe laden with those pretious ornaments that beautifie this life, and those Panchayan odours that sweeten the deprivation of it, and perfume posterity.*

sterity. True it is that thy seas a
rough, & to him that lancheth into th
deepe, appeare at first terrible, but
with confidence & constancy he plo
them up, and with a fixed patience
dures the frownes of an angry skie,
shall at length discover a cal
smooth as thy owne forehead, on whi
Fortune, Time, and vice could nev
yet imprint one wrinckle. Vnder t
sacred safe conduct hath many a
perstitiously devout distressed fem
pilgrim (after the endurance of he
and cold without, of hunger, and thi
within, and other miserable accide
innumerable) arrived with com
at the supposed shrine of this our bl
sed Saint, who here (having no o
guard than thy potent selfe) expo
her dainty feet to the knowne cru
of flints hard, and sharpe alike,
her sacred person to labour, and i

nite hazards incident to the poore Traveller. She who meriteth to ſit under a cloth of ſtate, beſet with the earths moſt precious ſtones, and a preſence throng'd with Empreſſes, as happy waiters graced in this attendance doth here commit her ſelf into the hands of ſolitude, and danger. Thus did the Spouſe of the holy Spirit overcome the narrow, and difficult paths of theſe ſteepe mountaines, Charity leading her by one hand, and Humility by the other. And if we diligently peruſe Gods ſacred Word, we ſhall there finde the Mountaines honour'd with many notable acts. Where did that parent of an innumerable iſſue, *Abraham*, prepare the immolation of his only ſonne? In a mountaine. Where did *Moſes* receive the Tables of the divine

Law? On a mountaine. Where did Christ, (his Humanity concealed) transfigure his face into a countenance of eternall glory? On a mountaine. Where did he shed his pureſt bloud, and lay downe his deareſt life as an expiation for our hainous and manifold ſinnes? On a mountaine. But why theſe famous Acts were performed on mountains rather then in vallies, Reaſon hath not a ſight ſtrong, and quicke enough to diſcover. But this is evident, that God hath not plac'd Heaven it ſelfe on the one ſide of us, or under our feet, but over our heads, that we might direct our looks, and fixe them on his eternall habitation, and aſpire to enter the celeſtiall Canaan; indeed our true countrey, out of which while we live, we leade but a

ing, and a flaviſh life, and are no other then unfortunate exiles. And ſurely the very ſight of ſublime places breeds in us high thoughts. We commonly looke downe on things deſpicable, the eyes of admiration are bent upward.

The cauſe why ſhe tooke this journey, I ſhall endeavour to relate ſo briefly, that I will ſtrive to avoid even long ſyllables. Yet do ſo many pious doctrines, and uſes, flow from theſe two Chriſtalline ſprings, that they alone are ſufficient to compoſe an entire booke of a vaſt volume.

The Angell that he might beget, and ſtrengthen a beleefe in Mary of what he had ſaid confirms his miracle with another; and tels

Law? On a mountaine. Where did Chriſt, (his Humanity concealed) transfigure his face into a countenance of eternall glory? On a mountaine. Where did he ſhed his pureſt bloud, and lay downe his deareſt life as an expiation for our hainous and manifold ſinnes? On a mountaine. But why theſe famous Acts were performed on mountains rather then in vallies, Reaſon hath not a ſight ſtrong, and quicke enough to diſcover. But this is evident, that God hath not plac'd Heaven it ſelfe on the ſide of us, or under our feet, but over our heads, that we might direct our looks, and fixe them on his eternall habitation, and aſpire to enter the celeſtiall Canaan; indeed our true countrey, out of which while we live, we leade but a

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her that her Couſen *Elizabeth* al
ſo in her old declining age ha
conceiv'd a ſonne, and that th
was now the ſixth moneth of h
being quicke. Theſe glad tydings
no doubt, delighted much ou
bleſſed Ladies minde, where the
could not ſtay without rendring
faire encreaſe of fruit, firſt in m
ditation, then in action. Queſtion
leſſe, ſhe no ſooner heard them b
her ſoul was delivered of a twin
of vows; the firſt was, to pra
God, that he out of his beſt ple
ſure, and infinite goodneſſe h
vouchſafed to crowne her couſ
fruitfull vertue with the bleſſing
a childe, ſhe being now in yeare
when deſpaire had chaſed all ſu
hopes out of her breaſt, and b
renneſſe (as the world conceiv
had ſeal'd up her wombe. T
oth

her was, all impediments ſet part, to give her couſin a viſit in r owne Country, and habitati. Having performed the firſt, r thankeſgiving for her, ſhe un- rtakes the latter, her journey to r. Nor was ſhe long about it, with all ſpeed poſſible ſet for- rd, leſt ſhe might ſeeme not adily to obey the incitation of holy Ghoſt, or be wanting to r couſin in any good office ſhee uld doe her. Neither could the ſideration of her owne Maje- of the teeming eſtate ſhe was of the diſaſters to which Tra- llers are ſubject, of the uneven- ſſe of the way, or of the * length hich *Melanc*thon affirms to have ne twenty Dutch miles) deter

In concione de viſitat. Mariæ.

* *From* Nazareth *to* ſalem, *where that* Elizabeth *dwelt, not many* derne *Divines but* S. Auſtin, *and* Beda *affirme.*

her from undergoing this tedious pilgrimage. And as she readily undertakes it, so she makes haste in it. She well understood that delayes in spirituall affaires were as dangerous as relapses in bodily diseases.

Her Charity. Behold here a prodigy of Charity that hath no respect of selfe, being onely intentive on the good of another. It was charity that withdrew her from her beloved privacy into the publike view, which till then she had ever shun'd. It was Charity that added wings to her feet, and armed her heart againſt all sinister accidents that could happen. It was Charity that emboldened her to goe to her cousin without any invitation, not being expected by her, or, happily, by her knowne to her, and with con-

den-

lence of welcome to enter her house. It was charity that caus'd her to tender service there where it was due to her selfe. It was charity that cheer'd her up, and sent her on this congratulating Embassy. Lastly, it was Charity that invited sanctity it selfe enclosed in this happy Maide to hasten to the sanctification of the childe in the wombe of *Elizabeth*.

Having patiently passed the troubles and annoyances of her voyage, she with joy at length arrives at her cousins habitation, into which she no sooner puts her head, but the reverend Prophetesse (having no other revealer, nor prompter than the holy Spirit) immediately knoweth the Mother of her Lord to be there present,

and knowing doth acknowledge it, and acknowledging doth magnifie her perfections, & professeth her house blessed in being graced with her vouchsafing to be in it. She at first sight discernes in her so many, and so great concealed vertues and mysteries, that a man would judge she had beene present at the enterview of her, and the Angell. Nor did she conceale these her excellencies, but did describe them with such skill and zeale, that Fame was even proud ro repeat them. Could the domesticall servants thinke you (having heard their Mistresse predicate her divine qualities, and transcendent condition) containe themselves from divulging a joy which a narrow humane bosome is not capacious enough to receive.

Could

Could they abſtaine from juſtly boaſting that a beauteous bleſſed Maide reſided then in their houſe, which together with their ſoules were by her glorious preſence enlightened?

But I can no longer with-hold my pen from ſetting downe the journey it ſelfe, and their mutuall ſalutations in the ſame words wherein the Text commends them to us. *And* Mary *aroſe in thoſe dayes, and went into the hill-Country with haſte to a City of* Iuda, *and entred into the houſe of* Zacharias, *and ſaluted* Elizabeth. *And it came to paſſe as* Elizabeth *heard the ſalutation of* Mary, *the Babe ſprang in her belly, and* Elizabeth *was filled with the holy Ghoſt: and ſhe cryed with a loud voyce, and ſaid. Bleſſed art thou amongſt*

amongst women, because the fruit
thy wombe is blessed. And when
commeth this to passe that the Mo
of my Lord should come to me? F
loe as soone as the voyce of thy salut
tion sounded in mine eares, the B
sprang in my belly for ioy. And bl
sed is shee that believ'd; for th
things shall be performed which w
told her from the Lord. Then Ma
said; My soule magnifieth the Lo
and my spirit reioyceth in God my S
viour; for he hath regarded the lo
nesse of his handmaid; for beh
from henceforth all generations sh
call me blessed. Because he that
mighty hath magnified me, and h
is his name. And his mercy is fr
generation to generation on them t
feare him. Hee hath shewed stren
with his arme, he hath scattered
proud in the imagination of th
hear

harts. He hath put downe the mighty from their ſeates, and hath exalted the humble and meeke. He hath filled the hungry with good things, the rich he hath ſent empty away. He hath upholden Iſraell his ſervant, being mindefull of his mercy. As he hath ſpoken to our fathers, to wit, Abraham, *and his ſeed for ever.*

In this ſalutation of *Elizabeth*, the ſpringing of the Babe in her wombe at the ſound of our ſweeteſt Ladies voyce requires not only our obſervation but aſtoniſhment. He that was greater than all the Prophets as yet not borne, and incloſed in the narrow compaſſe of the Wombe no ſooner heard the charming voyce of this heavenly Nightingale, but he leaped for joy, eſſaying then, and there to

S. Bernard *saies, that if an Infant was so over-joyd at the sound of her voyce, what will the joy of the Celestiall inhabitants be, when they shall see and heare her?* Serm. 1. de assump. Mariæ.

to exercise the office of the Fore-runner of his Master. The asseveration of some that this was not an effect of the Virgins vertue, but of the Word incarnate may be admitted for good, if we onely have eye to her Vertue, and exclude the aide, and power of the divine Grace. But all Wisedomes Children are by Truth, her selfe informed that many things are lawfully attributed to secondary Causes, the primary and efficient cause not rejected. And this way we may impute to *Mary* what worke soever God with her co-operating hath wrought either in the

ouſe of *Zachary*, or elſe where
or the benefit, and inſtruction of
poore mortals. Neither will any
ound, and ſollid judgement attri-
any thing to the conſpicuous
erits of the Virgine *Mary*, or any
ther Saint, without the concur-
nce and predication of the di-
ine Grace, who by thoſe Saints
at ſerve, and feare him, diſtri-
tes his gifts, and favours to Man-
inde. That ſentence of Chriſt is
way obſcure; *He that beleeves in*
ſhall do the works that I do, and
ater. By many examples the
riptures do confirme the com-
ing of Saints to any mans dwel-
g to conferre upon him both
race and Happineſſe. Three An-
ls came to *Abraham*, whom he
ertain'd taking them for pil-
ims, when the Patriarch forth-
with

Ioh. 14.

Gen. 18.

with became fortunate in the ob
teining of that for which so lon
he had offer'd up vows to God
namely a sonne; his wife and h
being by the course of nature, p
Gen.19. the generation of children. A
gaine, two Angels came to *L*
and lodg'd in his house at So
dome, and sav'd their host, and h
two daughters from being redu
to cinders with their City. *I*
Gen.30. visited wicked *Laban*, to who
God granted a singular bless
for that idolater, in so much th
he himselfe confessed it, saying,
have learned by experience that G
hath blessed me for thy sake. Eliz
4.Kin.4. to expresse the kindnesse he rec
ved at the hands of his hoste
the Shunamite, restored her de
sonne to life. The Apostles the
selues brought peace, and felic

all hoſpitable men whoſe dwel-
ings they enter'd. And ſhall the
rivall of Gods owne mother at
e houſe of *Zachary* prove onely
ine, and fruitleſſe in bringing
divine conſolation to her kin-
ed? Yes ſurely, *Elizabeth* taſted
e fruit of her all-gladding pre-
ence; for ſhe could not conceale
e pleaſure conceived in her
art, but utter'd it in the beſt
ords ſhe could. *Iohn* himſelfe alſo
liſht it, and by his motion gave
hat ſignes he could of the con-
t, and worſhip he receiv'd, and
d. Neither could it otherwiſe
but the Manſion of *Zachary* and
e adjacent countrey were both
lighted, and ſanctified by the
ree moneths reſidence of her,
o bore not about, but in her, the
thor, and conſummatour of all
piety.

piety. Their joy, queſtionleſſe, w
beyond imagination great, in th
they had never before ſeene Go
gifts, and graces paſſing throu
ſo pure an organ of his Spirit. B
the aged Propheteſſe her ſelf
doubtleſſe was in a holy delitio
Trance at the very firſt ſteppe
made over her threſhold, a
thought her houſe, but halfe bl
till the other foot was in. Th
mutuall ſalutation ſurely was lo
and ſubmiſſive, which I cann
better expreſſe then by the ſupp
ſition of the encounter of t
ſhades ſoftly creeping ore the f
of the earth. The Evangeliſt de
vereth onely the Compendium
their conference, which could
be but as long as ſerious. Th
treated ſurely of deepe miracul
Myſteries, as of the incarnation

the Word, of the perſecution of
ther, and Gods onely Sonne, as al-
o of his paſſion, and the ſalvation
Mankinde. And here it will nei-
her be a thing impious nor imper-
inent (binding our ſelues ſtrictly
the ſubſtance of their ſhort diſ-
ourſe) to ayme at the amplifica-
on thereof, by which happily it
ay come to paſſe that the ſuppo-
ion of what they might ſay may
rne to a Truth of what they ſaid
deed. This then, or like to this
as, or might be the ſpeech of the
oly Matron to the more holy
irgin.

What looks ſhall I put on? What
rds ſhall I aſſume, what entertain-
nt ſhall I finde out, O Princely Vir-
! to give thee a welcome anſwera-
to thy merits who art Superiour, to

the Saints in Heaven, and the prim
glory of thy Sex on Earth? I am whol
ly transformed into ſhame when I co
ſider every way thy Excellency, an
my unworthineſſe. Alas! what is ther
in miſerable me that ſhould invite the
mother of my Lord to afford me a vi
ſit, who am the meaneſt of his Cru
tures? What equality is here? Tho
who art full of Grace, comeſt to m
void of it: Thou who art famous fo
thy Fertilitie to me who have beene
long time infamous for my Barre
neſſe. Thy Charity and Humili
made thee forget thy ſublime and m
low eſtate, and conducted thee to m
poore Cottage no way fit to receiv
thee. Moſt of thy Sexe having attai
ed to thy ſupreame condition (w
did'ſt conceive and nouriſh the Cre
tour and Redeemer of the world wi
that thy cleareſt bloud of which he w

made

made) would have advanced their heads above Mortality, and disdaining all inferiour Conversation would have demanded as their due, to be assumed into the imperiall Heaven. But in thee, one heat hath expelled another, the flames of thy zeale have utterly consumed those of thy Pride (if any thou ever had'st) and thou art so farre from vaunting, that thou by all meanes seekest to conceale that daintie Fruit of which all Posterity shall taste, and never be satisfied, and for which all Generations shall call thee blessed. But from others thou mayst hide it, from me thou canst not, to whom the Spirit hath reveal'd it, and the springing of the Childe in my wombe hath testified it; and if the Children of Israel should be so dull, and unhappy, as not to apprehend it, God would give the stones an articulate voyce to proclaime

claime it. The Lord of mee, and all things elſe, hath firmely ſeated himſelfe in thee, and choſen thee for his mother, to the end that the ſeed of Abraham *may breake the head of the Serpent, and the Sonne of* David *bring reliefe to his forlorne and diſtreſſed Church, ſtreightly beſeiged by the Prince of Darkneſſe, and his infernall Troopes. True it is, I am above thee in yeares, but in deſert infinitely below thee, and therfore ought to have prevented this thy painfull journey by comming firſt to thee to congratulate thy happineſſe, and not onely in the behalfe of my ſelfe, my kindred, and Nation, but in the name of Gods ſelected people to tender thee moſt humble though not condigne thanks for ſo readily aſſenting to beare, bring forth, and educate their Soveraigne Lord and Redeemer. But thou having gotten*

ten the ſtart of me in goodneſſe, art come to me ere I could ſet forward towards thee, and now thou art here, I repine at nothing more than at my diſability to ſerve thee. Thou who meriteſt to have the earth, the water, and the ayre ranſack't to pleaſe thy pallat, ſhall have nothing here but the ſimple viands of Nature prepared by as ſimple an Art. But truſt me, what ever is here is truely thine owne, and my ſelfe to boot. My willing heart to waite on thee, and obey all thy Commands, ſhall ſupply all other defects. Such is my deſire to attend, and pleaſe thee that doe but ſignifie thy pleaſure by the leaſt becke or nod, and thou ſhalt ſee how nimbly I will beſtirre theſe aged limmes, and place before thine eyes a plaine and evident converſion of Impotency into Ability. I ſhall not

thinke any paines my weakeneſſe can endure too great, nor any coſt my purſe can compaſſe too deare for thee. Wherefore I earneſtly beſeech thee to bleſſe me, and my houſe with thy long abode, and let not our courſe and ſlender fare make thee haſten my death in thy ſudden returne. O my brighteſt Starre! envy me not thy comfortable ſhine, but let me Live in it till I exchange it for a brighter in Heaven. The dayes of my Pilgrimage are even now at an end; O leave me not then, who art the Staffe and Solace of mine Age! but ſtay the arrivall of my laſt minute, and with thy faireſt hands cloſe up theſe my dimme eyes. So ſhall I bid farewell to this world with contem, and enter the other with glory. Thou my ſweeteſt Princeſſe who haſt verified the Prophecy of Eſay, and being an unſpotted Virgin, doſt conceive and

bring

bring forth to the world our Emanuell; grant this my first, and most humble request. O thou daughter of Abraham! *who hast surpassed thy Fathers Faith in beleeving things which seeme more impossible to humane reason: if in this rude speech of mine I have over-talked my selfe, or underspoken thee, impute it to my declining and doting yeares, and grant me thy Pardon. Thus I end, but not without adding to those I have already given thee, a Myriade of Welcomes, and a million of Aves more.*

The vertuous Maid undoubtedly was not here mute, but devided her speech betweene God and her Cousin. She directed (with I know not whether greater Piety, or Prudency) her praise to the former ere she would vouchsafe to

make a reply to the latter. An answer without all peradventure her humanity afforded her, and to this purpose for ought we know, might it be.

" Dearest Cousin, your own wise-
" dome will plead my excuse, in
" that I rendred him laud to whom
" it belongs, ere I accepted of it my
" selfe to whom it is not due. You
" magnifie me, and I my Creator.
" Your sacred issue moved with de-
" light at the sound of my harsh
" voyce, and my spirit rejoyceth in
" the Mercy of my sweetest Savi-
" our. You give me attributes more
" proper to my Maker than to me,
" not unlike those Heathen who
" take off the heads from the Ima-
" ges of their Gods, and fasten them
" to the shoulders of their Princes

Sta-

Statues. Your commendations fit your ſelfe better than me, and reſemble thoſe reſplendent rayes which returne into the radiant body that ſent them forth. In a word, you have ſubſcribed my Name to your owne Character. The humbling and undervaluing of your ſelf is a ſtrong argument of your vertue; for in a field of Corne we ſee the empty eares to hold up their heads, the fuller to hang them downe. I am in my Spring, you in your Autumne; I produce the Bloſſome, but you beare the fruit. What the moſt penetrating Eye can diſcerne in me, the moſt partiall Tongue will call a ſuperficiall ornament, but the dimmeſt ſight may ſoone diſcover that in you, which the moſt detracting Penne muſt be forced

to

" to ſtyle eſſentiall worth. Thus di
" nified, give me leave to tell yo
" ſweeteſt Couſin, that you off
" me an affront together with yo
" ſervice. A ſeemely ſight it we
" ſurely to behold decrepit age wa
" ting on active youth, wiſedom
" on vanity; a venerable Matron
" a ſimple Girle. The ſcope of m
" journey is to attend you, to le
" you my ſtrength, now your ow
" failes you, and to ſerve yo
" through all the offices of yo
" Hand-maid. Doe but intima
" your will by the leaſt ſigne, a
" you ſhall ſee me flye to perform
" it. Your Invention cannot d
" viſe any thing ſo impoſſibl
" which my will (ambitious
" pleaſe you) will not judge mo
" eaſie to be executed. Where
" you intreat me to ſtay long wi
yo

you, you transgresse the Lawes of friendship in petitioning her whom you may justly and boldly command. A thing strange to me it is, that you should thinke me so stupid and senceleſſe, as that I should need an invitation to be made truely happy. Before I had the honour to see you, I envied those that enjoyed your sweet and divine conversation, and thought they enricht themselves with my losse; wherefore a staffe to beat me hence is more requisite, than Oratory to keepe mee here. Ever since the blessed Angell imparted to me the newes of your being fruitfull, my desire to see you hath beene restlesse, and next to God I have onely meditated you and your goodnesse. O my best Cousin! whose fervent

and

" and devout prayers obtaine vi
" ries, whoſe Faſts abundance, jo
" with me in thankeſgiving to G
" for the grace which I ſhall ne
" be able to conceive, much leſſe
" expreſſe or deſerve. Him with
" my heart and with all my ſoule
" invoke, that bleſſings may
" upon you before, and above yo
" wiſhes, and that you may
" long live to his glory, and
" Comfort.

Had their three months deme
nour each to other, together wi
their godly diſcourſe, and pio
practiſe of it, beene penn'd to p
ſterity (had all other Bookes be
burnt ſave that and the Bible) t
Femall ſexe in theſe two ſho
have found matter ample enou
to exerciſe both their Meditatio

action. Sure I am the Romiſh urch, as in an honourable me- riall of this their Charitable counter, hath ordained the An- ll Celebration of a ſolemne aſt. And the Councell of *Baſil* what authoritie in other things ow not certainly in this one icular very commendable) h decreed the ſolemnization of Feſtivall day in theſe verie rds.

Sess. 43. Concil. Basileen.

e Bleſſed Virgin being inſtructed e celeſtiall Meſſenger, and con- d by the Holy Ghoſt, aſcended in the mountanous Countrey, and d the humble houſe of Zachary. Iesus *who was in her wombe, haſte to bleſſe* Iohn *as yet in his ers Belly. And the moſt glorious in viſiting her Couſen* Eliza- *was pleaſing to her both in her loving*

loving visitation, and fruitfull C
loquie. The Consideration of this E
celling Mystery ought to delight t
mindes of the Faithfull, wherein t
two glorious Mothers (who bore ab
them the comencement and acco
plishment of our Salvation) did so
miliarly communicate their joyes,
wherein the most excellent Virg
Mary of the House of David, and
lizabeth the most venerable amon
the Daughters of Aaron discour
together. The first of these hadin
sed in her wombe the Creatour
Redeemer of us all, the latter his F
runner. These Saints being made
thers by a Miracle conferr'd toget
of the Divine benefits they had re
ved. The meeting of this worthy p
was most happie, and illustrated w
great, and glorious testimonies of
divine Grace. The one conceived

cooperation of the holy Spirit, the
er by Myracle in her old Age, and
their issues foretold by the celesti-
Angell. Iohn as yet imprisoned in
Mothers wombe doth worship his
d borne to him in Maries Belly;
d Elizabeth fill'd with the Holy
ost doth congratulate the Concepti-
of the Sonne of God, and the Savi-
r of Mankinde, and prophecying
lares her Cousen blessed in belee-
g, and contemplating the myste-
revealed to her. On the other side
ary full of unutterable joy, layed up
these sayings in her heart, which
re she had heard from the Angel,
d now from Elizabeth, and breaks
into a Song of Thanksgiving to
Lord. Who can sufficiently praise
reat Mysteries? Who can declare
se joyes to the full? Iohn not yet
me rejoyceth, Elizabeth is delight-

ed

loving visitation, and fruitfull C
loquie. The Consideration of this E
celling Mystery ought to delight t
mindes of the Faithfull, wherein th
two glorious Mothers (who bore ab
them the comencement and acco
plishment of our Salvation) did so
miliarly communicate their joyes, a
wherein the most excellent Vir
Mary of the House of David, and
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together. The first of these hadin
sed in her wombe the Creatour
Redeemer of us all, the latter his Fo
runner. These Saints being made
thers by a Miracle conferr'd toge
of the Divine benefits they had re
ved. The meeting of this worthy p
was most happie, and illustrated w
great, and glorious testimonies of
divine Grace. The one conceived

cooperation of the holy Spirit, the
er by Myracle in her old Age, and
their iſſues foretold by the celeſti-
Angell. John as yet impriſoned in
Mothers wombe doth worſhip his
d borne to him in Maries Belly;
d Elizabeth fill'd with the Holy
oſt doth congratulate the Concepti-
of the Sonne of God, and the Savi-
of Mankinde, and prophecying
lares her Couſen bleſſed in belee-
g, and contemplating the myſte-
s revealed to her. On the other ſide
ary full of unutterable joy, layed up
theſe ſayings in her heart, which
re ſhe had heard from the Angel,
d now from Elizabeth, and breaks
into a Song of Thankſgiving to
e Lord. Who can ſufficiently praiſe
reat Myſteries? Who can declare
ſe joyes to the full? John not yet
ne rejoyceth, Elizabeth is delight-

ed

ed with the arrivall of the Virgin Mary is extreamely pleased in the Mysteries, the Saviour of the world acknowledged by his Fore-runner, not onely the Angels, but Heaven and Earth resent the pleasure, and the whole Trinitie is glorified with new praises. Wherefore the greatnesse of these joyes is to be extolled with especiall commendations, and with singular solemnities to be celebrated, and the Lord in the wombe, the Virgin that beares him, the barren that conceives, and the Fore-runner that is sanctified ought to be presented with all imaginable praises and honours.

With this pious and grateful ordinance of the Church I conclude the visitation of our incomparable Lady, and now proceed to her Deliverie.

We reade in holy Writ of three supernaturall Productions, the one of *Adam*, the other of *Eve*, the last of *Christ*, which as most miraculous we are now to treat of. Here in his *Nativitie*, as before in his *Conception*, let us turne *Inquisition* into *thanksgiving*, and with one spirit and voyce sing aloud, *The stone which the Builders refused is the head of the corner. This was the Lords doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day which the Lord hath made, let us rejoyce, and be glad in it.* This is our wedding-day, wherein by the Sonne we are joyned to the Father. This is the day of the new union, wherein he who is God remaineth the same that he was, yet for our sakes is borne, and made what he was not; wherein he that

Her liverie.

Ps. 118. 22.

was every where without a Body, is made preſent to us by a Body, that what God hath by *Nature*, men might receive by *Grace*. This is a great, a joyfull, a fortunate, a deſired day, the end of the Law, the end of the *Prophets*, the beginning of the Goſpell, nay the Goſpell it ſelfe. This is a day of State, uſher'd by the Angels, follow'd by the Apoſtles. Let our Mindes remove the diſtance of Time and place, and dwell a while with our all-holy-Lord and bleſſed Lady, leſt we looſe the pleaſure of this day, the leaſt Accident whereof is Myſterious. What a brave aſſembly of Viſitants of all Conditions reſorted this day to this place, which then might rightly be called the Randevous of the Saints? Would you ſee thoſe who are a-

bove

bove men, but below him who is borne? Behold the Angels singing his birth. Do you desire to behold the married? Here you have *Zachary* and *Elizabeth*. The unmarried? Here you have *Symeon*. Widdows? Here you have *Anna*. Priests? Here againe you have *Zachary*. Wise men? Here you have them from the East. Ideots? You have here the Shepheards. But here is to be noted, that these keepers of Beasts heare the voyce of the Angels before any of the other, first receive the Gospell, and first divulge it. And in this they were more happie then *Augustus* himselfe, who (though he had made a firme Peace by Sea and Land, and had now the third time shut up the Temple of *Ianus*) yet was he ignorant of the blessed

Peace concluded on betwixt God and Man. O how much sometimes Ignorance avails in Divine matters! Kings, Potentates, the Rulers of the Earth, and the wise of this world are asleepe while Christ is borne. These most simple of Mortals, and innocent as the creatures they tend, watch all night, and therefore are first made partakers of these joyfull news. As their owne wooll not yet dipt in any dye readily drinks in any colour they please to bestow on it: So their minds voyd of all humane wisedome, greedily suckt in the Divine; Faith is the *Compendium* of Salvation, and humane knowledge of times the obstacle of Faith. *Aristotle* having confined to Heaven, the Maker, and Moover of it, would never have beleeved his

his birth here below. *Plato* would have derided this miraculous relation, who the more he attributed to God, the leſſe would he have expected his ſo humble comming into the world. Neither would the Stoicks who held God to be a fire, nor *Hipocrates* who thought him to be a warm'th, ever have look't for him clad in fleſh and bloud. Wherefore they are here elected witneſſes of this ſtrange truth, whoſe Science was of ability ſtrongly to beleeve, not wittily to diſpute. O what proficients in Faith did theſe ruſticall Swaines prove in a moment! What a profound ſecret is imparted to them? Let us examine the verity of this by that infallible Touch-ſtone, the text. *And there were in the ſame Country, Shepheards abiding in the field,*

keeping watch by night, becauſe of their flocke, and loe the Angell of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord ſhone about them, and they were ſore afraid. Then the Angell ſaid unto them, Be not afraid; for behold I bring you tidings of great joy that ſhall be to all the people: That is, that unto you is borne this day a Saviour which is Chriſt the Lord. And this ſhall be a ſigne unto you; you ſhall finde the Childe ſwadled and layd in a Cratch. And ſtraight way there was with the Angell a multitude of heavenly Souldiers, prayſing God, and ſaying; Glory be to God in the high Heaven, and Peace on Earth, and towards men good will. And it came to paſſe that when the Angels were gone away from thence into Heaven, that the Shepheards ſaid one to another; Let us goe then unto

Beth-

Bethlem, *and ſee this thing that is come to paſſe, which the Lord hath ſhewed unto us; ſo they came with haſte, and found both* Mary *and* Joſeph *with the Babe layd in the cratch. And when they had ſeene it, they publiſht abroad the thing that was told them of that Childe.*

Here three things eſpecially are remarkable:

Firſt, their forwardneſſe in believing:

Secondly, the ſpeed they made to ſee what they had believed, and

Thirdly, to publiſh what they had ſeene.

That they quickly believed, appeares by the haſte they made to ſee. They no ſooner ſaw him, but they found him to be the King of Iſraell indeed, yet withall to be a

Shepheard. They instantly discerne this to be the Shepheard, who was to lay downe his life for his flocke. The Prince of all Shepheards whose sheepe-fold is the world: The Shepheard that was to seperate the Goates from the Sheepe. They discover'd this to be the immaculate Lambe that was to take away the sinnes of the world. They disclos'd this Lamb to be the greatest Lyon of the Tribe of *Iudah*. Whom now they looke on in the Cratch, Saint *John* shall hereafter behold on his Throne. These men in whom there was no guile as they could not deceive others, so they could not in this be deceiv'd. They needed not suspect any fallacy, and therefore might safely relate this divine wonder to all they met.

The

The ſecond witneſſes of this Mi-
cle are the Wiſe men. After
od had laid open the Treaſure
his divine ſecrets to Idiots, he
ewes them alſo to the wiſe. It
emes the Earth at this time was
come the Booke of Gods grea-
ſt Myſteries, and Heaven the
dex. In this they finde the Star
this King of the Iewes, which
aving beene before the decla-
r of his Nativity) they now
ake their guide in their journey.
he Starre performing this duty
o its Creator, at length brings
hem to *Bethlem*, where they view
im in the Crateh, whoſe Nativi-
y before they had found in the
eavens. To him they doe Ho-
age, tender adoration, and pay
ribute, and opening their Trea-

ſures,

ſures, make him an oblation of Gold, Incenſe, and Mirrh. Whom before they had in vain ſought in the Heavens, they now finde on the earth, and in the most ſorded part of it, a Stable, full of ſeverall ſtinkes; where he (to whom none are worthy to be ſervants) had two dull Beaſts for his Companions.

Returne now you Sonnes of wiſe-dome to your owne home, by much more learned, by more than much more happy than when you ſet out. Heaven is now ſet open to you, which before your unbeliefe kept ſhut against you. If you be Chaldæans or Perſians, or both, ſpreade through thoſe Nations the fame of that which you have ſeene. Publiſh in all places this the greateſt myſtery of Piety

which

hich God is onely able to produce, ly faith can apprehend. Of all eatures to man onely belongs the ft of Reaſon, by the rule whereof he aſures all things. But doe not you ſo, leſt you fall not onely into an parable, but a damnable errour. llow you the inſtruction of Faith, d where ere you come with a holy ride, proclaime that God is manife- d in the fleſh, juſtified in the Spirit, ene by Angels, reveal'd to Shep- ards, found out and ador'd by you ur ſelves, and hereafter to be aſ- m'd, and to ſit in glory farre above oſe ſtarres you daily read. Goe, and ve out that there is nothing greater Heaven, than what you have found a Stable. Yet ere you depart, con- incce the ſtiffe-necked Iewes of their fty, but groſſe errour, in diligently eking to know God in that part wherein

wherein he will lye hid, in taking no notice of him that part wherein he would be knowne: in looking for Saviour from * *Heaven, who is already borne on earth. Yet now I consider their obstinacy better, I wish you spare your here fruitlesse advise: for the eares of this wicked generation is stopped, their hearts obdurate, and they are as fully resolved to goe on in their wickednesse, as you in your journey.*

* *The Iews when ever it lighteneth, set open their windowes: for they hold their Saviour shall come in lightening. On this reade* Buxdorfius.

Having proved his Nativity by these holy Testators, let us now enter ourselves, and view this pretty one in his narrow lodging, lay our selves prostrate before

before him, worſhip him, and recreate our ſelues with the lovely object. And that our delight may be the greater, let us firſt behold him, and his ſweeteſt Mother a part, and then both together. But let us here ſhut out the Phariſees, and barre them the ſight of this heavenly Infant, who urge the Law, and reject him the Author fit. Let us exclude the Arrians, who deny his coequalitie with the Father, and the Sabellians who confound the Trinitie, of which it is diſtinctly one, and hold that there is in it one Eſſence, and one Perſon: and the Samoſatenians, who derogate from his Nature, and avouch the Word (which truly he is) to be no other then a vaniſhing ſound. Nor let us onely keepe out theſe, but the whole

ſwarme

ſwarme alſo of Atheiſts, and Hereticks. Let the Philoſophers ſtay without, who not ſo impious yet more ignorant, cannot diver the bottome of this Myſtery. to all thoſe who are honour'd the aſſumption and profeſſion his glorious Name a free acceſſe granted. Enter then you litt flock, you few, whom his Fathe hath beſtowed on him, and ſe him, who when he gave the La appeared in Fire, now he offer Grace involv'd in Hay. Yet in thi dejected poſture, in this cour manner while he lay, he want not a whole Army of Angelical ſpirits that declar'd his Birth Men, and they who had befor chanted his praiſes as he ſate Glory, now ſing his goodneſſe ly ing in the Cratch. Though he hav

loomely roofe over his head,
East obſerves his approach.
ough the poverty of his Hu-
nitie obſcures his Deity, the
arres in Heaven make it known.
hold him who came humble to
humble, for the humble, and
his humility is above all ſubli-
y. Reverently and intentively
k on him who deſcended from
aven to Earth, who came to
u, into you, who is borne in the
ght, borne in the midſt of Win-
, and borne (after the wretch-
humane condition) naked, and
ne offer him aſſiſtance. Swad-
g clothes are wanting, ſome
gges are found out, a Cradle is
ffing, a Manger is at hand.

Here he cryes to you, and holds up pretty hands to Heaven, which he cals

cals to witneſſe that he can hum
himſelfe no lower. Can you view
humble, this mercifull ſpectacle,
not weepe your ſelues into marble:
ſpeedily put on ſackcloth! beſprin
your ſelues with Aſhes, kneele do
in the duſt and dung under the M
ger where your Lord lyes, knock y
ſelues on the boſomes, fetch ſighs
grones from the bottom of your hear
repay him the teares he lent you,
by your ſad geſture and deportm
demonſtrate how much you are bou
to him who ſuffered for you even in
Birth.

Having ſeene the Sonne, no
ſtedfaſtly place your eyes up
the Mother. Behold the unpoll
ted Mayd(a great part of the wo
der) ſitting neare the Manger, b
ing voyd of all luſt, chaſt in Sou
an

d Body, who doth now con-
ſſe that of which ſhe is not capa-
e without a miracle, to wit, that
e is a Mother, and with fixed
es expreſſing now joy, now ad-
iration, ſees her ſelfe wedded to
eaven. She beholds her ſelfe a
other deliver'd of her Parent, a
ndmaid of her King, and Ma-
er. She to her aſtoniſhment finds
at ſhe hath brought forth an
ue more mighty then *David*,
ore ancient then *Adam*. And now
e feeles the tender, and ardent
fection of a Mother, but the old
we ſhe hath borne her virginity
ives it an allay. Here the Mother,
e Midwife, and the Nurſe are
ne and the ſame, leſt any thing
ſſe pure ſhould handle him then
r who brought him forth. And
ow ſhe nurſeth this Heavenly in-

fant with her pure milke, which
flows from no mortall luſt, but
from the Celeſtiall Grace. Her
breaſts white as their owne milke
preſſed by her delicate fingers, and
white as either, he ſoftly pats, and
playes with. Sometimes he re-
paires to them for ſport, ſome-
times for neceſſity, and he who
feeds all things elſe draws thence
his nouriſhment. He caſteth up
now one eye, now the other, and
with a pleaſing looke gives her
ſweet ſmile, not unlike to that
which *Zephirus* imprints on the
cheeke of the Roſe. She returns
him another, and her infinite, but
chaſte, affection ſhe divides be-
tweene her Sonne, and her virgi-
nity. And now her extaſie being
little over, ſhe cals to minde that
ſhe hath often read her owne ſtory
fore

told by the Prophets, *That a*
in should bring forth a Sonne.

, O fly farre hence you Monsters
men, who carry leprous soules in
ed bodies, and have not one ver-
rescue you from the Legion of
vices. Depart hence you who are
s to Lust, whose fetters you have
so long, that they have made a
impression in your mindes. You
have spent your time in the
h after alluring dresses, and in
n dalliance shall have no en-
here. You who have received
delight one warme Masculine
shall here be exclu ed. Nay you
have had onely one unchaste
t, shall not here be admitted,
t being prepared by a c'eansing
Repentance. This is the lodging
rity, into which nothing must

come that is uncleane. But you w
chaſte eyes have never ſent out
full beames, nor received them
whoſe Boſomes have beene of p
againſt the fierce aſſaults and B
ries of Temptation, you are ſo
from being forbidden to come
that you are earneſtly invited hi
You who have lived ſpirituall A
riſts, whoſe ſpirits have trium
over the Fleſh, on whoſe Cheeks
tude, Prayers, Faſts, and Auſ
have left an amiable pale: You
ply your ſacred Arithmeticke,
have thoughts cold, and cleare
Chriſtall beads you pray by: Yo
have vow'd virginity mentall,
corporall, you ſhall not onely hav
greſſe here, but welcome. App
with Comfort, and kneele down
fore the Grand white Immac
Abbeſſe of your ſnowy Nunneries

ent the all-saving Babe in her
us with due veneration. Never
e more of the Fœcunditie of
locke, since you see here that
himselfe is the fruit of Virginity.
who have tyed your selves in ho-
nds, from which you wish never
by death to be freed, who have
rather lawfully to yeeld to the
lions desires of the flesh, than un-
fully to subdue them: you who in
ity and simplicity of life have
ly imitated Christ and his
se: you whose Fertility is blessed,
nely in preserving and propaga-
the humane Race, but in augmen-
also the number of the Saints in
ven, to you a free and open accesse
riven. You widdowed Turtles,
have lost your Mates, and either
e vowed never to match againe,
ray'd to God that when you doe, it

may be to his glory; you alſo ſ
have admittance. Virgins, Wiv
and Widdowes, ioyne hands, and
circle this the moſt perfect paire t
ever graced the earth: Behold to y
aſtoniſhment, and alſo to your conſol
tion a milde and gentle Maide,
whom neither Childe-birth defac
Virginity, nor Virginity fruitfulne
Feed your eyes with the ſight of
whoſe minde is a Paradice without
Serpent, on whoſe lookes, words, a
actions, Modeſty is a diligent atte
der. And now in Peace doe you dep
too, but take this charitable Admo
tion along with you, that (in emul
tion of this your deareſt Miſtreſſe
you lay up all her graces and perfec
ons in your hearts, and withall con
nually meditate her patience, whi
contented it ſelfe with bad lodgi
and worſe accommodation, the

embrance whereof hath made me
r since I read this passage, not to
very solicitors where, or how I

22 And when the dayes of her Purification, according to the Law of Moſes were accomplished they brought him to Hieruſalem, to preſent him to the Lord;

Having waited on her in her Delivery, we will now attend her to her Purification. This day (the celebration whereof is instituted in the Church) is called *Candlemasse*, as much as to say, the *Day of Lights*, on which (while Masse was singing) very many Tapours were burning in the Church. The lustration of houses was yearely usuall with the Romans in the month of February, from whence this custome in the Church is derived. *Innocentius* thus propounds and solves the Question. *What is the reason, saith he, that on this Holy day we use so many Lights in the Church? The cause of this institution is two-fold. The first is, that a Heathenish custome may be converted into a Christian Right or Ordinance, and that*

Her Purification.

In serm. de Purif. B. Mar. Virg.

that which was performed by ſuperſti-
tious Idolaters in honour of Ceres
and Proſerpina, *may be turned into*
the praiſe and glory of the Virgin
Mary. *The ſecond is, that they who*
by Grace are purified, by this Cerem-
ny may be admoniſhed to imitate
thoſe prudent Virgins, who (as the
Evangelicall Parable teſtifieth) came
not without their Tapours lighted to
the Nuptials of Chriſt their Spouſe.
This day the Church uſed to
pray, that as the viſible Lights
chaſed away the darkeneſſe of the
night: ſo the hearts of the Faith-
full might be illuminated by the
Inviſible flames of the holy Spirit,
&(being cured of their blindneſſe
brought upon them by vice)might
with pure and cleare eyes diſcerne
thoſe things which are pleaſing to
God, and neceſſary to their ſalva-
tion;

tion; and having pass'd through the sad, darke, and dismall accidents of this world, might at length arrive at Heaven, where they shall behold, and enjoy a Light everlasting. This day is not onely made Holy by the Purification of the Mother, but by the oblation also and presentation of the Sonne, of whom, as of the more worthy, we must first discourse.

It was truely a great abasing of the Sonne of God (for which by the Prophets he was styled a Servant) who being not a debtor to the Law, but the Lord of it, and the onely First-borne free from sinne, yet endured and underwent with other Children, both the Iewish Circumcision and oblation, and at once publikely honour'd

nour'd his Fathers houſe, and (to uſe the Prophets phraſe) fill'd it with glory. There offer'd by the Virgin hands of his Mother, he was to his Father a moſt pleaſing oblation, being the end of the Law, and all the antient Sacrifices. Neither was the longing of *Simeon* and *Anna* onely ſatisfied with his aſpect, but the ardent wiſhes alſo of many others, in whoſe mindes the old ſparke of Faith now burſt out into new and bright flames, which did not onely illuminate their owne, but other Boſomes alſo. Not a few, queſtionleſſe, at *Hieruſalem*, markt this day with a white ſtone, and did celebrate it with joy and thankeſgiving, in that the Light foretold by *Eſay* then aroſe, and comforted all thoſe to whom the ſhine and warmth

warmth of it extended. *Israel* had never ſeene her Meſſias, till then when ſhe had free leave to kiſſe, embrace, and dandle him in her Armes, and therefore her joy muſt of neceſſity be more than ordinary. Yet ſome of her inhabitants were deafe, and could not heare the Prophets proclaime his comming; others were blinde, and could not diſcerne him being come, nor were ſenſible at all of the Honour they received in the venerable preſence of him, and his incomparable Mother.

I now come to our ſweeteſt Lady, the time of whoſe Lying in being expired, ſhe ſets forward to the Temple. I have read ſome who poetically ſet downe her going thither, and compare her to

Auro-

Aurora, whom the Poets describe sitting in a golden Chariot drawn by a *Pegasus*, her yellow haire spred over her milky shoulders, with a Torch in her hand enlightning this inferiour world. For my owne part (though of all humane studies I am most taken with Poesy) yet both by Nature and Grace I abhorre to write of things divine in the stile of the stage. But this Religion and modesty will license me to averre, That when she went to be Purified, she was in all things the very figure and resemblance of Sanctity it selfe. No doubt but she was accompanied with a Beavy of Shee-Saints, of which she was the Chorus. Neither was *Ioseph* absent, who as before he had beene a guardiant of her, and her Infant in her Delivery, when he

was

as not capable of the Miracle; now he is altogether incapable his owne Felicity in attending s faireſt Mate, and deareſt Ma- r to the holy Temple. And to doubts but this bleſſed one y'd more in this Iourney than ſeph or any other. Saint *Iohn* and int *Luke* teſtifie that it was a re- ious cuſtome amongſt the very athen from remote places to me to *Hieruſalem*, and in the mple thereof to performe their votions. Doe you thinke this ous Maide can be out-ſtrip- d in the performance of a holy ty by the Gentiles? Can you agine ſhe could neglect and oſe the occaſion of time and ace offered her, to commend to r Maker in her beſt words the owes and prayers of her prepa- red

Iohn 12. *Acts* 2. 8

red heart? She came to *Hierusalem* (for certainly she dwelt n there) with farre greater spe and joy, questionlesse, than to h Cousins house, this being a bu nesse that much more concern her, in that she was by more a stronger tyes bound to serve Go than *Elizabeth*. And here by t way we must not omit her Hum lity and Charity. Of the fi whereof we have a cleere demo stration in this, That what oth women did out of feare of t Law, she was perswaded by perfect faith, and an humb obedience to performe. For th her Purification was necessary, beleeve no man will affirme, u lesse in this sense, That the Ri and Ceremonies imposed on th purified by *Moses*, were wit decenc

Her Humility.

decency to be obſerved by her who had borne him that came to fulfill, not to deſtroy the Law. She could not be maculated in conceiving, becauſe ſhe knew no man, nor in bearing, by reaſon it was without a man. Why ſhould he be ſolicitous to redeeme her ſonne, who was himſelfe the Redeemer of the world? This was ſurely an act produced by her humility, as was alſo her refuſing the company of the rich, and her aſſociating the poore and needy, though moſt impure, and abject. And ſhe her ſelfe was ſo penurious, that ſhe had not wherewithall to buy a Lambe, whereof to take oblation. Whereas the Rich hide and hourd up their wealth, he drawes forth the * Treaſure brought her by the Wiſe men,

Her charity.

* *This is the obſervation of* Dammianu, Dammaſcen. *& many more.*

and with alacrity distributes it amongst those whose wants required it: yet was part of the present gold, which upon charitable uses surely was consumed; for her Frugality and Temperancy were such, that in so short a time she could not possibly have spent the value of it. But these perfections are not to be wondred at in her, who being a Doctresse, scorn'd not to be a Disciple, and strongly to endeavour the attaining even to those vertues which by Nature were innate, and by Grace engrafted in her. Ravisht in soule with these her Excellencies, me thinkes I see her Majestically pacing on to the Temple, and heare her thus speake to those who accompanied and met her on the way.

My deare friends, Sisters, and fellow servants, I have ever desir'd and endeavour'd (as neare as Humane frailtie will give me leave) to imitate my sweetest Sonne, whose profound Humility and perfect obedience can never sufficiently be extolled. Full well he knew Humility to make the first step to eternall life; Obedience the second; the former of which to teach all men he descended from Heaven, the latter to demonstrate, he became obedient to his Father, even to the suffering of the cursed death of the Crosse. Would you see me a Proficient in both these supernaturall vertues? Behold me who am unpolluted, (as not having conceived by humane meanes) going like one vitious, and impure to be purified. I who am free from the observation of the Mosaicall

Lawes and Ceremonies, have ſubjected my ſelfe to them. I who am voyd of all wilfull ſinne, willingly goe amongſt other ſinfull and uncleane women, that I may be to all an Example of Charity and Humility, to none a preſident of ruine. I thought it not enough that my fruitfull Virginity had produced Salvation to the world, unleſſe by Example alſo I taught how this Grace (applicable to all, applied but to a few) by you alſo might be obtained. This is my way to the attainement of celeſtiall glory, and let it be yours to purchaſe your ſelves eternall ſalvation. Doe thus, live thus, that you may ſhine holy Tapers in Gods militant Church, and glorious Stars in his Triumphant.

She with her devout traine being come into the Temple offer'd her

her gift to the Prieſt, and received a propheticke Benediction from *Symeon*. Whether this old man were a Prieſt, or a Layman, I will not here diſpute; certainly he was a man bleſſed above all the Patriarchs and Prophets, in that he ſaw God face to face, and may be ſtyled the moſt profound of all Divines, who (being the laſt juſt man of the Law, the firſt of Grace, a Iew by Religion, in Thankſgiving a Chriſtian) comprehended ſo many Myſteries in ſo few words. This holy Man (the Scribes and Phariſees dreaming on no ſuch matter) had long ſince ſeene his Saviour comming, whom he no ſooner ſaw borne into the Temple by his mother (who then reſembled Modeſty ſupporting ſanctity) but he ſnatcht this prettie

Timoth. presb. Hieroſol. in orat. de Propheta Simeone.

Babe out of her Armes into his owne, and not able to containe his joy, in a divine Rapture Swanne-like (his death being then at hand) ſung this his ſweeteſt Ditty. *Lord now letteſt thou thy Servant depart in Peace: for mine eyes have ſeene thy Salvation, which thou haſt prepared before the face of all Nations; a Light to lighten the Gentiles, and to the glory of thy people Iſrael. And he bleſſed them, and ſaid unto* Mary *his mother, Behold this Childe is appointed for the fall and riſing againe of many in Iſrael, and for a ſigne which ſhall be ſpoken againſt; yea and a ſword ſhall paſſe through thy Soule, that the thoughts of many hearts may be opened. And* Anna *a Propheteſſe confeſſed the ſame to all thoſe who looked for the Redemption of Iſrael.*

Luke 2. If the viewing and embracing of Chriſt

Christ so dilated the spirits of the old mans heart, and made him so sensible of this his great felicitie, that he would expect here no greater, but desired rather a dissolution then the fruition of any thing else on earth, What may we judge her content to be, who conceiv'd, bore, brought forth, and brought him up? Whose affectionate looks, kisses, and embraces he had by day, the two later of which the night it selfe could not barre him of. Her greatest detracters surely cannot imagine her so stupid as not to be apprehensive of the delight, the Comfort, the happinesse, the honour his presence did impart, nor so unthankfull as not to acknowledge, and to her power expresse her gratitude. Certainly her soule was in a hea-

venly Trance when she contemplated the grace and felicity she had in Gods owne house, and before an Assembly of his elected people to acknowledge her gratitude for the inestimable benefits he had vouchsafed her, but especially for this, that in his glorious eyes she seem'd worthy (though in her selfe undeserving) in her owne name, and that of his chosen to present him with such a sacrifice, such a gift as exceedingly surpassed in excellency, all Hosts, Sacrifices, and Sacraments whatsoever, being indeed, their onely scope and end. *Anna* the Mother of *Samuel* is praised for her diligence in Prayer, the fruit whereof she reaped in her dispair'd of Fertility. And of our admired Virgin, we reade that she carefully

ly frequented the Temple, of which (being wiſe) ſhe knew the inſtitution, and (being pious) the cuſtome, which ſhe moſt religiouſly obſerved. Wherefore this day of her Purification, and at all times elſe, without all peradventure, ſhe much excelled *Anna*, and her whole ſexe in the fervency of her Oriſons, in the ardency of her love, in purity, and ſublimity of minde, in holineſſe of life, and divine contemplation. We may boldly conclude that ſhe pour'd out her prayers here in greater abundance than ſhe did in *Zacharies* houſe, where ſhe could not ſuppreſſe the flame of her zeale from breaking out into the praiſe of God her Saviour, in whom ſhe rejoyced. To this effect, happily, here ſhe pray'd.

O eternall and gracious God! I a
below other women in merit, but a
bove them all indebted to thy supreme
Maiesty, for making me the Taber
nacle of thy onely Sonne, the Temple
of thy Spirit, and for this speciall ho
nour done mee in the Temple of th
Service, the congregation where
makes me the onely point wherein t
lines of their affection, and admir
tion doe meete. If women be respecte
for their fertillity, needs must I be i
great esteeme with all men, who (b
thy eternall Predestination, and fa
therly providence) have brought
forth thy onely Sonne, their Redee
mer. With a bowed heart, and ben
ded knees I acknowledge that tho
hast faithfully and mercifully fulfille
all those thy favourable promises
made me by thy Angell Gabriel, *my*
Cousin

…sin Elizabeth, *and thy holy Pro-*
…ts. *Thou who can'ſt neither de-*
…ve, *nor be deceived, haſt made me*
…e *vertue of thy Spirit operating*)
…ther, *my virginall integrity ſtill*
…erved. *That long long'd for* E-
…nuel, *(than whom nothing grea-*
…r *better could be given by thee,*
…ken *my me) I have at length pro-*
…d *to ſave all thoſe that beleeve in*
This magnificent immenſe, in-
…ſtible, *unvaluable Treaſure,*
…eloved *Sonne of thine in whom*
…art *well pleaſed; This Saint of*
…nts, *by whom all things in Hea-*
…nd *Earth, are re-eſtabliſht, this*
…iour *of the world I here preſent to*
…, *as a gift moſt acceptable in thy*
…t. *He whom all Nations, and the*
…hers *themſelves have ſo much*
…ſted *to ſee: The Angell of the new*
…ament, *the ſeed of* Abraham,

the

the ſonne of David, *the King of* I
rael, *in whom all generations a*
bleſſed, the Lord of the Temple
here come to illuſtrate his owne hou
O mercifull Father! open the eyes
the dimme ſighted Iſraelites, th
they may ſee the glorious Light th
now ſhines on them, and not onely
knowledge, but worſhip their Meſſi
and imbrace him in their hearts,
I doe in mine Armes. Neither let t
Rayes of this new borne ſtarre reſt
onely on them, but on all thoſe al
who ſit in darkeneſſe, and the ſhad
of death, that to them it may reſt
life and luſtre. So ſhall they ackn
ledge thee, and him whom thou h
ſent, CHRIST IESVS, *and*
made ſpirituall dwellings for thei
reſide in, there to receive due than
and praiſe for ever and ever.

Betweene her Purification, and
ſion of her Sonne, ſhe is not of-
mentioned in holy Writ, but
en ſhe is, it is ſtill to her praiſe
honour: As when her care for
poor made her petition Chriſt
Wine to revive, and refreſh
ir drooping, fainting Spirits;
d when ſhe ſaid to him, *Why*
you us'd us thus? your Father
I have beene to ſeeke you.
hence all women may learne
mility, motherly care, and con-
all Faith. She who was without
emiſh, as being Gods owne Mo-
er, whoſe chaſte boſome no car-
l thought had ever entred, who
okt on all men with the ſame in-
cency & ſimplicity with which
e beheld Statues, deigned to call
poor ruſtical labouring man Huſ-
band,

Her charity.

Her motherly care, together with her coningal Faith and obedience.

band, from whoſe deare com
ny, no flight, terrour, travaile,
paines could ſeparate her.
what the Scripture omitteth, m
be ſupplied by our charitable im
gination, which cannot but co
ceive all thoſe her Actions buri
in ſilence, to have beene of t
ſame pure thred with the reſt
her life. The truth of which w
finde confirm'd in her perſev
rance in goodneſſe, even to h
ſonnes end, and her own.

Her demeanour at her Sonnes death.

*At his death wee reade ſhe was pr
ſent, and there ſtood (ſaith the Evan
geliſt) by the Croſſe of Chriſt his M
ther and her Siſter* Mary Cleopha
and Mary Magdalen. *When there
fore Ieſus ſaw his Mother, and his be
loved Diſciple ſtanding by, he ſaid
his Mother, Woman, behold thy Son
an*

nd he ſaid to his Diſciple, Behold thy other, and from that time he tooke er for his. His pardoning of the hiefe is not a greater argument his Mercy, than his taking care his Mother was of his Piety. e gives Temperancy the cuſto- of Chaſtity, and commends eſe to each other who were re- lved to live and dye Virgins. int *Bernard* ſayes theſe words Chriſt to his Mother, included uch bitterneſſe, for they put her minde that ſhe was to make a mmageable exchange of Chriſt r *Iohn*, of the Servant for his ord, of the Diſciple for his Ma- er, of the Sonne of God, for the nne of *Zebedæus*. And this was e reaſon (if we give beliefe to *antuan*) that he called her Wo- an, not Mother, leſt the very ſound

ſound of that deare word ſhould make her more ſenſible of his approaching loſſe, and force her into an immoderate griefe. But ſorrow was no Noveltie to her for that ſaying of Chriſt, *In this world, you ſhall have affliction*, was in her verified, whoſe life contained more miſeries then minuts, which ſhe patiently underwent, knowing that the more diſtreſſed ſhe was here, the more bleſſed ſhe ſhould be hereafter. And if we ſhall adde the light of Reaſon to the Evangelicall Truth, we ſhall ſoone perceive that a fatall ſadneſſe haunted her from the birth of her onely Sonne to his buriall. When ſhe was great with him, and readie to lye downe, the inhumanity of the Bethlemites was ſuch, that they confined her, and the Lord of all things

things to a Stable, and would not ſupply her with as much as Linnen, a Mantle, and other neceſſaries wherewithall ſhe might defend her ſelfe, and her ſweet Babe from the moyſture of the night, the ſharpeneſſe of the winter, and other intollerable inconveniences. When her Childe was eight daies old, ſhe ſaw him looſe bloud in his Circumciſion, which her diuining ſoule miſgave her to be a type of the deare remainder he was to ſhed. Then againe her minde was infinitely vexed for the butchery of thoſe guiltleſſe Children which were murthered for the ſake of her owne innocent infant; of the ſorrow and miſerie of whoſe Mothers, her tender compaſſionating heart was a moſt competent Iudge. From this

bloudy Massacre to save her Saviour, she was constrained (without taking leave of her friends, or disposing of what was hers) to take her flight with him, & through danger, * darkenesse, and horrour, to make her way into Ægypt. When he was twelve yeeres old, she lost him, an Accident more grievous than any of the former; for heretofore her study had been to preserve what she had, now her care was to finde what she had not. What an Agony her soule suffer'd at the lamentable tydings of the beheading of her Sonnes Forerunner, I leave to the consider-

*Vernulæus *saies that those who flye from danger, travaile most by night, and therefore it is likely our blessed Lady did so.*

ſideration of all thankefull ſoules; for ſhe could not without being ſtayned with ingratitude, but mourne for his abſence and violent departure out of the world, who had received ſo much joy at her preſence before he came into it. But above all theſe, the unequall'd Treacherie of *Iudas*, who deliver'd this Lambe of God, as a prey to theſe Wolves; the infidelity of his other Diſciples, the malignity of his Iudges, the cruelty of his Executioners conſpir'd to make her miſerable. Nor is it unlikely that ſhe bewailed the ingratitude, the obſtinacy and impiety of her Nation, who revil'd him that bleſſed them, and tortur'd him who came to ſave them. With what amazement and ſadneſſe was her heart furpriſed think

ye, when the newes came of her Sonnes being apprehended? But when she saw him forsaken by his friends, bound by his enemies, accused before the high Priests, derided by *Herod*, despis'd by the people; scourg'd, and tortur'd by the command of *Pilate*, his body trembling, torne, and pierced, besmear'd with his owne bloud, and hung between two Theeves; then, and never till then did the Sword foretold by *Simeon*, passe through her Soule. *Luther* saies this Prophecy of *Simeon* was spoken to her, not to *Ioseph*; for on her alone the whole weight of sorrow was to be laid. True it is that many differ about the interpretation of this Sword. To cleare all doubts, we must take notice that the holy Scriptures mention foure sorts of Swords. The

The firſt is a Corporall, or materiall ſword, and of this Chriſt ſpeakes to *Peter*, *All that uſe the Sword, ſhall periſh with the Sword.*

The ſecond is a ſpirituall Sword, of which Saint *Paul* makes mention, when he ſaies, *Receive the ſword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.*

The third is a Sword of Scandall or Ambiguity, with which the Apoſtles themſelves were ſtrucken, when they forſooke their Maſter.

The fourth is the Sword of Griefe or Tribulation. With this the Prophet *David* averres the Soule of *Ioſeph* to have beene pierc'd

Pſal. 33. *Pſ.* 105. *Gen.* 37.

pierc'd when his death was plotted first by his trecherous Brothers, next by his incontinent Mistresse.

That this Sword whereof *Simeon* Prophecied, could be no materiall one, is evident, in that we read not of any violent death she suffered. That it could not be the sword of the Spirit, is manifest; for the word of God was her daily delitious food at the same time when *Simeon* made this Prophecy. *Origen* indeed will have it to be the sword of Ambiguity or Infidelity: which erroneous opinion of his, is refuted by many great Fathers of the antient Church, and by *Franciscus Lumbertus*, an accute Protestant Doctor of the moderne in these words. *Those, saith*

In exposit. Evang. Lucæ cap. 2.

ſaith he, who will have this to be the ſword of Infidelity, are not to be hearkened to; for (beſides that they can produce no proofe of this their opinion) it is contradictory to the Text, moſt raſh, and moſt untrue. How can it be that the ſword of Infidelity ſhould penetrate the breſt of Gods ſacred Mother, into which, infidelity never made the leaſt impreſsion? From the beginning, her Faith was moſt firme and intire. Let therefore thoſe Blaſphemies and wicked ſlanders of carnall men be put to ſilence. I will attribute nothing to the bleſſed Virgin, but what I reade in the holy Writ, where ſhe is pronounced bleſſed, becauſe ſhee beleev'd. We have many teſtimonies of her Faith, but of her Infidelity not one word is extant in the ſacred Scriptures. Yet this prophane aſſertion is not a whit ſtrange, or to be

pierc'd when his death was plotted firſt by his trecherous Brothers, next by his incontinent Miſtreſſe.

That this Sword whereof *Simeon* Prophecied, could be no materiall one, is evident, in that we read not of any violent death ſhe ſuffered. That it could not be the ſword of the Spirit, is manifeſt; for the word of God was her daily delitious food at the ſame time when *Simeon* made this Prophecy. *Origen* indeed will have it to be the ſword of Ambiguity or Infidelity: which erroneous opinion of his, is refuted by many great Fathers of the antient Church, and by *Franciſcus Lumbertus*, an accute Proteſtant Doctor of the moderne in theſe words. *Thoſe,*

In expoſit. Evang. Lucæ cap. 2.

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marvelled at in *Origen*, who held that Christ dyed for the Angels, and the Starres, and whose soule was, indeed, no other than a Mynt of Heresies. *Melancton* affirmes, that her sorrow was much asswaged by her Faith, which assured her of his Resurrection. She knew she had borne the Messias, whose bloud was to wash away the sinnes of the world. Wherefore she might well be amaz'd, distrustfull she could not be at all. The holy Spirit certified her this was not a destroying death, but a triumphing. Her Faith, the oftner it was tryed in the furnace of af-

Her passive Fortitude, and Patience at the Death of her Sonne.
Melan. in cap. 27. Matth.

liction, the brighter ſtill it ſhew-
. She ſtood with the affection
a Mother, the paſſion of a wo-
an, but with the conſtancy and
itude of a man, in beholding
owne bloud ſpilt, her owne
rent, and mangled before her
e. With an unſhaken confi-
nce, and a true internall valour,
beheld his body naked, and
urg'd, his hands and feet nailed
the Croſſe: yet ſometimes the
ings of her relenting, mourne-
l heart were ready to cracke
h the very thought of his cru-
tortures and afflictions; but as
en againe they were ſtrengthe-
d and comforted with a full aſ-
rance that he ſhould overcome
m all, and death it ſelfe. She
od here (her Sonne onely ex-
pted) the prime patterne of a
ſollid

ſollid Faith, and conſtant Patien
to all poſteritie, in that neither t
feare of Tribulation, of perſecu
on, of the wracke, of the ſcourg
or death it ſelfe could divide h
from her Chriſt. She committe
not that errour moſt incident
women, many of which gent
ſexe periſh in the midſt of the
Lamentations, and will neith
admit of Counſell, nor Comfo
She did not teare her haire, ſcrat
her face, batter her boſome, ſee
to ſtifle her ſelfe, or gave any
ther deſperate ſigne of a rageſ
ſorrow, nor did ſhe curſe her en
mies, or make imprecations f
Vengeance, or ſo much as mu
mur againſt them; but attended t
ſad event with the ſame calm
neſſe of minde with which th
meeke Lambe did his end. H
ca

riage was beyond the Levell of
ſure, and in all things ſutable
e modeſty and gravity of
a Matron. She fear'd not at
he fury of the Iewiſh Souldi-
s that environ'd her, but ſtood
re, and fac'd danger. Though
was an eye witneſſe of his paſ-
, and ſaw his Limbs diſten-
, and wrack'd, yet did not the
s ſhe ſaw, wound her ſo deep
oſe ſhe heard. The Roman
ers uſed to have Wards, or
ers to ſave their Eares: She
greater need of ſuch to barre
entrance of blaſphemies able
provoke God (if his mercies
e not above all his workes) ut-
y to deface Nature, and reduce
world to its firſt Chaos. She
rd him call'd a Drunkard, a
ſphemer, a breaker of the Sab-
both,

both, a lover of Publicans and Sinners, nay a very Divell, who was her and Gods onely delight. Yet did not all these killing objects, these impious slanders, drive her into the mercilesse gripes of despaire; for she was confident that the two persons of the Trinity would not forsake the third. *Melancton* commending this small story to our sad and serious contemplation, adviseth us, That when Tribulations and Death it selfe come upon us, we should imitate this holy Virgin, who mixed a heart killing sorrow for death with a joyfull assurance of his Resurrection. *Consider, saith he, what a Conflict the Faith of Mary had. There was in her an extream griefe linked with Faith and Hope. Let us in our death thus comfort*

Melan. in loco prædic.

selves

s, and harbour the ſame
ghts with Mary, *ſtill fix-*
on God the Eyes of our
h. And verily we muſt
eve that no ſmall mea-
of Beliefe was requi-
to temper and aſſwage
reat a * ſorrow. If we
ceive that ſhe was ſo
out bowels, as not to
ve for the death and
on of her deareſt, and
ly Sonne: we muſt
all beleeve with the
niches, that he had a
ntaſticke body, not
de of his Mothers fleſh.
doubt, when (after
had left, and betray'd
) ſhe heard him cry
that God himſelfe had
aken him alſo, her
teares,

*Sophronius. ſer. de Aſſump. Beatæ Virg. *maintains that ſhe ſuffered more than all the Martyrs, in that the paſſion of the minde is greater than that of the body, and ſhee in ſoule felt moſt, becauſe her love to him was above all others.*

teares, her ſighes, groanes, her countenan her very poſture, her do full voyce, all united t forces to expreſſe greatneſſe of her ſorro Liſten and you ſhall he her thus lament.

Her Lamentation is alſo expreſſed by S. Bernard, Serm. qui incipit, Signum magnum.

O my deareſt Sonne, thou who healeſt oth ſhouldſt thy ſelfe be wound That thou who freeſt oth ſhouldſt thy ſelfe be bou That thou who art the Fo taine of Life, and Creat the waters, ſhouldſt thy be thirſty! That thou cloatheſt all things, ſhoul thy ſelfe ſtand naked! O deareſt Maſter, how haſt t treſpaſſed againſt this ob

e Nation! that it ſhould ſo thirſt
er thy pretious bloud? Thou woul-
ſt have cover'd them under the
ings of thy gratious Providence, as
Henne doth her Chickens, but they
ſe rather to periſh, than to come
ther for ſhelter. With them the
ud are more ſenſible of thy paſsion,
un the living, and their devouring
pulchers more mercifull then they
emſelves. O my Sonne, my Sonne,
at I ſhould ſee thee ſuffer, and not
able to ſuccour thee! O that I were
oblation as ſpotleſſe, and as grati-
s in thy Fathers ſight, as thou thy
lfe, that all thy afflictions, all thy
rments might be mine. Were my
wer correſpondent to my will, I
ould reſcue thee from Legions of thy
emies. But alas I am a weake wo-
an, and all my ſtrength lyes in my
ngue, which will onely ſerve mee

to

to deplore thy losse, and that I truely doe from the very bottome of my heart.

Thus, or to this purpose, questionlesse she bewail'd him dying but when she once beheld him dead (Love and Beauty being banisht that face) and saw with their malitious cruelty survive him, when she view'd his very carkasse pierc't, and water together with bloud flowing thence when she had leisure to imbrace his dead body, to number his wounds, to kisse them, and to bathe eyes to wash away his stripes: she then was so wholly oppresse with anguish of soule, that she ardently at that instant desired her soule, if possibly, might transmi

grac

grate out of her living body, into his dead one. True it is that many affirme she felt not those torments which other women endure in Child-birth, who are liable to the malediction laid upon *Eve:* But if at his comming into the world, she was not sensible of any paine at all, certainely at his going out, the griefes of all women contracted into one, equals not hers alone. And assuredly her sorrow was much increased when she saw *Mary Magdalen*, and the other women so vehemently to grieve, whom his death not so nearly concern'd as it did her, nor were they so able as she to judge of his value. Then questionlesse in this, or the like phrase she renewed, and redoubled her complaints.

O my ſweeteſt Sonne! I bewaile mine owne, and the wretched condition of all thoſe, whoſe ſoules thou haſt feaſted ſo many yeares with thy melifluous Language. My griefe is anſwerable to my affection. If Samuel *lamented the death of a reprobate King, if* David *wept over wicked* Abſolon *with this exclamation,* Abſolon my Sonne, O my Sonne Abſolon; *can my teares be too prodigally powr'd upon thee, who art Sonne to me, and Righteouſneſſe it ſelfe? Who ſhall forbid or hinder me for crying out,* Ieſus my ſweet Sonne, O my ſweet Sonne Ieſus? *If thou didſt weepe over* Ieruſalem, *as lamenting her deſtruction then at hand, ſhall I not bewaile thy neere approaching end? Thou didſt then compaſſionate the future Ruine of thoſe ver-*

ſtone

ſtones, which now with a ſilent gratitude ſeeme to condole, and weepe for thee. When thou cam'ſt to the Tombe of Lazarus, *thou wert ſo farre from reprehending the teares of others, that thou wepſt thy ſelfe for company. Thy owne example then warrants the juſtneſſe of my griefe; for when thou wert living, the ſmall paine thou felt'ſt in the ſleeping of thy foot was, and ought to be more to mee, than the eternall ſleepe of* Lazarus *could be to thee. And as thy teares for him were tokens of thy humane nature, not ſignes of thy diffidence (in that thou knew'ſt he would forthwith ariſe) ſo are mine for thee, witneſſes of my wretched eſtate, not of my diſtruſt, who am aſſured of thy ſpeedy reſurrection. Nor doe I onely grieve my owne griefe for us for mans ſake, I rejoyce in thy Fathers Grace, who delivers thee to*

*death, and in thy Charity who doſt ſuffer it: So likewiſe in mans behalfe I am griev'd that he ſhould be the curſed cauſe of thoſe thy extreme torments: for as not to joy in the benefits thy death hath brought with it, would argue his ingratitude, ſo not to condole for the tortures that attend it, would demonſtrate his cruelty. And here I faithfully promiſe thee, that both I, while life, and thy Church, while the world doth laſt, ſhall yearely ſpend this dolefull * time of thy Tragicall expiration in Prayer, faſting, ſeverity, of diſcipline, mace-ration of the fleſh, and contrition of the ſpirit, as becomes thy mournefull Mother, and thy*

S. Bernard *cals this* Hebdomadam pœnoſam, *the weeke of pennance; and the high Dutch,* Die Martyr Wocken, *the Martyrs weeke.*

by gratefull Spouſe to doe.

Thus condoling, thus bemoaning hers, and the generall loſſe, he attended his herſe to the Sepulchre provided by *Ioſeph*, where never man was laid before; for it was not fit that Incorruptibility ſhould ſucceed corruption in the ſame lodging. This fragrant flower was no ſooner ſet in the ground, but ſhe ſent many a deare drop after it to faſten it at the roots; for ſhe knew within three dayes it ſhould ſpring up againe, not to grow in the earth, but to be tranſlated into Heaven, there for ever to flouriſh, and perfume the celeſtiall habitation. Nor were her eyes, ſaith *Damaſcen*, cloſed with his Monument, but watched themſelves almoſt blinde with a

greedy expectation to ſee the temple of his body built up againe, which three dayes ſince was deſtroyed. After many a longing looke ſhe eſpied the Tombe to open, and her onely joy to iſſue forth, whom full well ſhe knew by the countenance and figure of his Humanity, but farre better by the cleere proofes of his Godhead; for the Graves delivered up their dead, many of which appear'd to their friends in the holy City. Some, and thoſe of great authority in the Church affirme that after his Reſurrection, ſhe of all others ſaw him firſt, and whereas the Scripture ſeemeth to inferre that *Mary Magdalen* firſt beheld him, they thus expound it, That the Evangeliſts would not make his Mother the firſt witneſſe of his Reſur-

Reſurrection (though indeed ſhe was) knowing that her teſtimony by the Iewes would be more ſuſpected than that of *Mary Magdalen*. I dare not poſitively conclude any thing herein, but I may ſafely maintaine that this her delight for his Reſurrection, counterpois'd her griefe conceived for his death. In her was now made good that of the Pſalmiſt; *According to the multitude of the griefes of my heart thy Comforts have rejoyced my ſoule*, and that of her Sonne, *Bleſſed are they that mourne, for they ſhall bee comforted.*

And who makes queſtion but that ſhe who with ſuch unutterable pleaſure diſcover'd his Reſurrection faithfully, and cloſely waited on him, till his Aſcention?

She who was as inſeparable to him as his ſhadow, without doubt, was on the Mount * *Olivet*, with other of the faithfull, when in the ſight of them all he aſcended. She heard, doubtleſſe, his laſt words, received his laſt benediction, and her ſight waited on him till the clowds imbrac't him, which it in vaine eſſay'd to penetrate. What Soule not it ſelfe tranſported with the view of a heavenly object, can ſuppoſe, much leſſe expreſſe what her contentment was when ſhe ſaw her owne fleſh flye above the reach of Envie, into the Armes of Glory? When ſhe beheld this high Prieſt, (his Sacrifice ended, and God fully appeas'd) enter Heaven there to ſit on the right hand of his Father, and to be the unceſſant and eternall Mediatour be-

* Epiphanius contra hæreſ. & libel. Ætij.

twixt him and man? With bended knees, erected hands, and yes, ſhe worſhips him aſcending, nd when her ſight failes, her adoation continues. Her zeale paſeth all the orbes betweene him, nd her with greater facility, and ibtility then the Lightning ſhooeth through the Ayre. Great is he vigour and force of the Spirit, when all things elſe ſet apart it is wholly intentive on the Meditaion of its Creatour. When by contemplation it is ſeparated from the body, it thinkes onely on him, lives onely to him, and is (as it were drown'd) in an inundation of his love. When it hath extinguiſht the ſcorching lawleſſe deſires of the fleſh, and kindled the holy ones of the Spirit; the body rebels no longer, but becomes obe-

obedient to it in all things. Wh
it hath once fixed its eyes on th
beloved object, it never remove
them thence. When it is once i
luminated with the beames of th
holy Ghoſt, it is preſently turn'
into all Eye, all Spirit, all Ligh
no otherwiſe than thoſe thing
the fire once layes hold on, ar
turn'd into fire it ſelfe. Of thoſ
who live in Wedlocke, it is ſai
that they are two in one fleſh; an
why may it not be ſaid of Chri
and the Soule wedded to him
that they are two in one Spirit
And if ever it might be reporte
of any, ſurely of this Holy Vir
gin, who (though ſhe was devide
from her Redeemer in Body) ye
in ſoule ſhe was united to him
When her eyes were growne
dimme with her ſo long dwelling
on

in that part of Heaven where they left, and loſt him, ſhe caſt them downe on the earth, the poverty whereof ſhe commiſerated in that ſhe was deprived of this one Iewell, in value above all it had left. And now She returnes into the holy City not diſconſolate, and dejected as other women are when they loſe their onely childe; but with a cheerfull look for her Sons victory, who had triumphed not onely over the Iew, but death and hell it ſelfe. She made her will lacky Gods, and though ſhe deſired to be diſſolved, and be with Chriſt, yet ſince it was his beſt pleaſure ſhe ſhould continue longer here below, ſhe readily aſſented, reſolving by her example on earth, to furniſh heaven with Saints. *Dammianus* ſayes, that after

after her Sonnes deceaſe, ſhe remained ten daies in Prayer and Faſting, expecting with a fervent longing, the promiſed comming of the Spirit. Saint *Luke* witneſſeth that ſixe ſcore men and women were aſſembled in one rome, and joyned in hearty prayer, of the which, *Mary* the Mother of IESUS was one. And as he names her laſt, ſo her wonted Humility perſwades me that ſhe had the laſt, and * loweſt place, and ſate beneath the other ſinfull women of inferiour quality, in remembrance of her humble Lord now exalted. And it is more than probable that ſhe was preſent with the Apoſtles, when the Holy Ghoſt came upon them, and that ſhe there received the firſt fruits of the Spirit. After which time

*S. Bernhard. In ſerm. de verb. Apocalyp. Signum magnũ.

we

we reade no more of her in holy Writ. For where, and with whom, how ſtrictly, and how pi-ouſly ſhe liv'd after the Aſcention of Chriſt, till the houre of her death, ſaith *Idelphonius*, is onely knowne to God the ſearcher of hearts, and to the Angels her dili-gent Viſiters. The reaſon which many alledge why neither the reſt of her life, nor death are pen-ned by the holy Evangelifts is this, that the Apoſtles were ſo bu-ſied about the converſion of the Jewes and the Gentiles, & enlarg-ing of the Chriſtian Church, That they had no time to ſet downe the particular Acts of her life after her Sonnes Aſcention, nor the ſeverall Circumſtances of her death, as where, when, and how ſhe dyed. Some Authours peremptorily main-

Serm. 5. de Aſſump. Virg.

maintaine (upon what ground know not) that ſhe liv'd to her ſeventieth yeare, and to her laſt houre dwelt in *Ieruſalem*, neare to her Sonnes Sepulchre. Others upon no better warrant averre that ſhe went with *Iohn* into *Aſia*, and continued with him at *Epheſus* till her death, and urge the authority of *Ignatius*, who affirmes that ſhe wrote to him in theſe words, *I will come with* Iohn *to ſee thee, and thy friends, &c.* Concerning her death, Some avouch that the Apoſtles, and the moſt eminent of the Primitive Church, were preſent at it. *Damaſcen* ſaith that Chriſt was alſo there in perſon, and that he thus ſpake to her: *Come my bleſſed Mother into the reſt I have prepar'd for thee, and that ſhee thus in way of anſwer prayed to him: Into thy*

Damaſcen. ſer. de dormit. Virg.

Serm. de dormit. Virg.

y hands, O my Sonne, I commend y Spirit: Receive that deare Soule hich thou hast preserved free from all buke. As I will not justifie all hese their Assertions for true, so the other side I will not condemne them as erroneous, not beg able to convince them of unruth, and for ought I know, they may have pass'd by unwritten Tradition from man to man. I will therefore affirmatively say nothing but this, that most assuredly her death was welcome to her, in that she had so often both meditated and practised it, having many times by austerity, and contemplation, departed this life ere she left it. If that of *Seneca* be true, that to dye well, is to dye willingly, then certainly she dyed the death of the Righteous. She was not

not ignorant that Death to the ju
is no other than a delivery fro
priſon, a laying downe of a bur
then, the end of a Pilgrimage, th
unmanacling of the Soule, th
diſcharging of a due debt to Na
ture, the returne into our tru
Country, the dore that opens in
to a never fading life, the entranc
into the celeſtiall Kingdome, an
the Vſher that was to conduct he
to her bleſſed Saviour, wit
whom ſhe had mentally conve
ſed ever ſince he left the earth
Since which time there be wh
avouch that ſhe never willingl
ſaw any man.

What honor could to this great Queene be done,
More, then be taken up, to heauen high.
And, there, haue GOD for Father, Spouse, & Sonne.
The Angells wayte, the world stand wondring by

Her assumption.

The ſame modeſty I have ſhew'd in treating of her death, I ſhall reſerve in diſcourſing of her Aſſumption, which by many of the Fathers, all of the Romiſh Church, and ſome of the Reformed is held for an undoubted truth, though upon no ſounder proofes than the former produce concerning her departure hence. *Bullinger* directly backs this opinion. *We doe beleeve, ſaith he, that the wombe of the God-bearing Virgin, and the Temple of the holy Ghoſt, that is, her ſacred body, to have beene aſſumed into heaven.* *Brentius* leaves it indifferent to us to beleeve whether or no ſhe aſcended in Soule, in body, or both. *It might well be, ſaith he, that as* Enoch *was tranſlated in body into heaven, and as many bodies of the Saints did riſe with Chriſt,*

Lib. de origine erroris, cap. 16.

Chriſt; *So* Mary *alſo might in body be aſſumed into Heaven. But moſt certain it is that ſhe obtained everlaſting Felicity*. And ſome ther be who demand why God might not manifeſt his power by her, privy to ſo many divine ſecrets and myſteries, as well as by an Angell, or as by *Elias*, who after long prayer, was taken up in a fiery Chariot. Some againe, (who hold that the dead who aroſe with Chriſt, aſcended with him into Glory, and were not againe reduc't into Aſhes) thinke the Aſſumption of *Mary* altogether as likely.

Damaſcen ſaith, the works

Homil. 1. in Die Aſſump. Virgin. *See* Athanaſius *on this very point, a Father of great repute, both with the Latines and the Greekes in his* ſerm. in Evang. de ſanctiſſima Deipara. *And* Iohannes Rivius *in his Booke* de abuſibus Eccleſiæ *though hee dares not maintaine her corporal Aſſumption, yet hee will not deny it, as being a thing probable enough.*

workes of the Deity are therefore
possible, because omnipotent, and
that there are some things, which
though they are wholly omitted
in holy Scriptures, yet upon evi-
dent reasons they are believ'd, and
exemplifies his position in the
Assumption of the Virgin *Mary*
Dammianus argues thus, That a
conceiving without sinne, she
brought forth her Sonne without
paine, a curse laid on all other wo-
men: so might it well be that she
who was without sinne, might o-
vercome Death, the reward of it
Some goe about to prove it by th
Ps. 131. Text, *Arise Lord into thy rest, tho*
and the Arke of thy Sanctification
Nay, I have read a moderne Ora-
tour, who thus elegantly describe
the manner of it: *When, saith he*
the Soule of this Sweet one, reactuate
he

her body, ſhe aroſe in Triumph from her Sepulcher, and was aſſumed into Heaven. In her paſſage thither, the orbes bowed and bended themſelves to make her a triumphant Arch through which ſhee might paſſe in greater ſtate. The Sunne with his brighteſt beames imbrac't her, that it might be ſaid, A woman was cloath'd with the Sunne. *The Moone ſtooped to her, that it might be divulg'd the Moone was under her feet. The brighteſt of the Starres interwove themſelves to make her a radiant Crowne, &c.* But this deſcription is no more theologicall, than the conſent of the orbes is Philoſophicall, and is no way correſpondent to the dignity of our Sacred ſubject, on whoſe triumphant entry into Heaven, having beene a faithfull, and reve-

rent Attender, I will now returne to vindicate her honour here on Earth, and make an Apology to Christians (with shame and horrour I speake it) for Christs owne Mother.

It may please then the gentle Reader to understand that two questions arise amongst the Moderne Divines. The one whether or no she merited to be the Mother of God; the other which way she could deserve that greatest of Glories. For the first, they affirm that never any Creature merited so great a blessing as the incarnation of Gods owne Sonne. For he sent, say they, his Sonne into the world, not urg'd thereto by our merits, but out of his owne meere Grace and Goodnesse. It

was

was a worke of his Charity, and condeſcending, not of retribution, or obligation: and therefore that he choſe not the Virgin *Mary* to be the Mother of Chriſt, as he was a Virgin, humble, obedient, adorn'd with Faith, Charity, and other divine vertues, but becauſe God had decreed her to beare his onely Sonne, therefore his beſt pleaſure was, ſhe ſhould be Miſtreſſe of perfections ſutable to ſo high a Calling. Wherfore Saint *Paul* ſaies, Becauſe God hath predeſtinated us, therefore he calles, juſtifies, and glorifies us, and not becauſe we are juſt, therefore he electeth us. Againe, they argue thus, that all our merits depend on Chriſt, and are deriv'd from him, and therefore he was without all deſert before

ıer Sonne had imparted it to her. That this was well knowne to her, is manifeſtly proved by her divine Hymne, in which ſhe acknowledgeth all good to proceed from him, and therefore to him aſcribeth all honour and glory. Others her Champions, who courageouſly fight, not onely for her heavenly, but earthly triumph, confeſſe that ſhe was not prefer'd to that ſupreme dignity by deſert, but by Congruity, as they call it: that is, not that ſhe was abſolutely worthy of ſo great a grace, but that ſince God had fixed a decree to ſend his dearely beloved Sonne amongſt us, ſhe of all others was the fitteſt to conceive and beare him. But here againe they differ about the way, in that ſo many waies they hold her capable of this

is ineſtimable Diadem. Some
ve the preheminency to her Vir-
nity, and ſay, the love of that
rew the Sonne out of the bo-
me of his Father, into her hal-
wed wombe; and therefore the
ext ſaies not, that a faithfull, an
edient, or an humble ſhall con-
ive, but a Virgin. Others attri-
ute this ſupreme favour to her
aith, by which (as Saint *Paul* de-
onſtrates all the miraculous
orkes of the old Teſtament have
eene begunne and perfected:
Wherefore her Couſin *Elizabeth*
aid to her, *Bleſſed art thou, becauſe*
hou haſt beleeved. Some aſcribe
his infinite honour done her, to
er Humility, to which all other
ertues flow, no otherwiſe than
he waters naturally runne to the
oweſt places. This caus'd her to

ſay

ſay in her gratefull Hymne, *Thou haſt regarded the lowlineſſe of thine Hand-maid.* Others impute the conferring of this greateſt bleſſing on her, to her obedience, in that ſhe committed all to the will of the higheſt, with this proteſtation *Behold the Hand-maid of the Lord be it to mee according to thy Word.* Others give her Charity the upper hand, which as Saint *Paul* teſtifies, gives life and ſpirit to all other vertues, they being without it no other than dead Images. Laſtly, ſome there are who will not award the Crowne to this or that peculiar vertue reſiding in her, but to the united Harmony of them altogether; for they ſay it is not this ſtring, or that, makes the Muſicke, but the accord, and conſent of all. For my own part,

art, (Divinity not being the heare wherein my ſtudies ove) a modeſt inquiſition will etter become me, than a bold nd peremptory Concluſion in ny point of Controverſie. Wher-re I moſt humbly ſubmit this, nd all things elſe divine, by me ndled, to the Cenſure and de-rmination of the Church of *ngland*, whoſe not Connivence one, but approbation I know I all have in boldly affirming that was a tranſcendent Creature, t to be ranked in reſpect of r worth, with any of her xe, but to have a place aſſign'd r apart, and above them all; ing not to be conſidered as a ere woman, but as a Type, or Idæa of an Accompliſht pie-. They who uphold the latter

of

of the aforesaid opinions, erre not so much in my judgement, in the adoring extreame, as some too severe maintainers of the former, doe in the neglecting. They are so farre from praising her themselves, that they most unjustly deprive her of the praise given her by others. The Puritans in generall, but especially the obstinate *non-Conformists* of this Land, are those I meane, who as in their Course oratory they called Queene ELIZABETH, *Queene Besse*, So they give this Holy Virgin no higher a stile, than of *Mal, Gods Maide*. They reject all Testimonies of her worth, as *Haile* Mary *full of Grace*, *The Lord is with thee*, and, *thou hast found grace with God*, and, *Hee that is mighty, hath magnified mee*, and

* *I have both heard these irreverent speeches, and read them censurd*

All

ll generations ſhall call mee leſſed, and, *Bleſſed is the mbe that bore thee*, and *leſſed are the paps that gave ee ſucke*, and *whence mes this that the Mother of y Lord ſhould come to me?* nd, *Bleſſed art thou amongſt men*, and, *Bleſſed is the uit of thy wombe*. They horre to heare her call'd *omina*, *Lady*, or *Deipa-*, *God-bearing*, few of em being ſo learned, e-en in their owne Facul-y, as to know that they ho ſo ſtile her, thinke ot that the God-head roceeds from her, but at ſhe brought forth hriſt, in whom was the nion of both Natures, and

in a Manuſcript of a moſt learned Doctour of the Engliſh Church. And this is very credible to alſuch as heare and peruſe their illiterate Sermons, full of invectives againſt the antient Saints, and Fathers of the Church, and abounding with predications of their owne ignorant Brethren.

and therefore they being inſepa-
rable, ſhe muſt by ſtrong conſe-
quence be deliver'd of both God
and Man. And why are they de-
terr'd from giving her theſe ho-
nourable Epithites? Becauſe for-
ſooth they challenge to them-
ſelves a greater meaſure of know-
ledge, but a leſſer of Piety than did
their Anceſtors. By diſclaiming
words, and phraſes familiar to
Antiquity, and by inventing new
leſſe reverent, and ſignificant,
they give all men to underſtand
that they had rather be reputed
good Grammarians, than Chri-
ſtians, and had rather give names
to the Church, than accept them
from her, and cheriſh prophane
Novelties, rather than allow of
Reverent Antiquities. They wreſt
many places of Scripture to prove
that

hat Christ himselfe slighted and buked her, which depravations f theirs (were my Readers urkes) I would draw into the ight and lay their deformity o- n to all; but it is needlesse (I ust) to informe a Christian, that who hath said, *Honour thy Fa- r and thy Mother*, would surely ver breake his owne Com- andement, and by slighting s Mother, trench upon a sinne f all others most detestable in s sight, Ingratitude. Of one ing I will assure them, till they e good *Marians*, they shall ne- r be good *Christians*; while ey derogate from the dignity f the *Mother*, they cannot true- honour the *Sonne*. They are confesse, much more favoura- le to her, than the Iewes, but by

by farre more detracting fro
her than the Turkes, which A
ſertion of mine is ſtrengthene
with evident proofes both out
the Iewiſh *Thalmud*, and Tu
kiſh *Alchoran*. The Iewes ca
her *Thlua*, as much as to ſa
Butchereſſe, or the wife of
Butcher, and *Sono*, a publik
ſinner, and *Thmea*, one pollute
with all manner of uncleane an
filthy luſt. And all of their Re
ligion are enjoyned in ſolemn
Prayer made in their Sinagogue
thrice every day to curſe Chriſt
his Mother, and all the Chriſti
an Sect, as is to be found at larg
in the third Booke of the Tha
mud, wholly compos'd of ridicu
lous Fables, groſſe Errors, an
horrid Blaſphemies. True it i
That the Turkiſh Alchoran no
acknow

acknowledgeth Chriſt to be God, and now againe denies him, taking him in at the fore-dore, and ſhutting him out at the backe, yet doe they hold him the greateſt of Prophets next their *Mahomet*. But his Mother they magnifie above all women that ever breathed this Ayre. Let us heare this Oracle ſpeake, in all things elſe falſe, but in this moſt true. Theſe enſuing are the very formall words of the Alchoran. *O* Mary, *excellent above all men and women, who perſevereſt in the ſtudy of God onely*. And in another place, *O* Mary, *God hath choſen thee, and purified thee, hee hath elected thee to make thee famous above the women of all Ages*: and againe, Mary *by behaving her ſelfe wiſely, is guilty neither of Malice, nor any wicked-*

neſſe, which cauſed us to breath our ſoule into her. Laſtly, *that Many men have beene perfect, but no woman was ever found perfect, but* Mary *the Mother of Ieſus.* But though truth is to be imbrac't where ever we finde it, yet it will appeare more gracefull in the mouthes of Chriſtians, whoſe moſt learned, moſt eloquent, and moſt judicious Doctour, we will produce, giving this Teſtimony of this our deareſt Lady. *Except (ſaith he.) the holy Virgin* Mary, *(whom for the honour I owe my Lord and Maſter, I will not name when ſinne is my ſubject) whom to have had grace infus'd into her, wholly to ſubdue ſinne, wee know by this, that ſhee was thought worthy to conceive and bring forth him, who aſſuredly was without ſinne: This Virgin, I ſay,*

S. Auſtin lib. de nat. & grat. cap. 36.

ſay, excepted, if we could Recall, and Aſſemble together all the Saints departed, and ſhould aske them, if they were without ſinne, they would unanimouſly thus anſwere: If we ſhould ſay we have no ſinne, we deceive our ſelves, and there is no truth in us. But becauſe the Fathers are no way ſuſpected of neglect towards her, we will ſpare their verdicts, and chiefly inſert their Commendations of her, who were the firſt Reformers of our Church. *Luther* ſhall be their Leader, who ſaith, *That none but the Virgin* Mary *either was, or ever ſhall be ſo holy: That the fruit of her wombe ſhall be bleſſed, ſince no other conceives without pleaſure and ſinne:* and againe, *In this is* Mary *bleſſed, That ſo great gifts are given to her, as ſurpaſſe humane underſtanding.*

For hence all honour and beatitude proceeds, that in the Vniverſall humane race one perſon ſhould be ſuperiour to the reſt to whom none ſhould be equall, becauſe one and the ſame Sonne is common to her with the heavenly Father. This he applyes to that ſaying of *Mary. Hee that is mighty hath magnified mee, &c.* The ſame Author in another place ſayes, *Mary is our Mother, Chriſt our Brother, and God our Father, and that all this is true, the Faithfull by effect doe finde. Calvin* cals her his *Miſtreſſe. Wee willingly, ſaith he, take* Mary *for our Miſtreſſe, to whoſe doctrine and precepts we are obedient.* * *Eraſmus* ſtiles her his

* *Though* Eraſmus *was not a Reformer of our Church, yet he is much ſuſpected by the Romiſh Church, and moſt ſerviceable to the Proteſtant in the ſetting out of the Fathers.*

Sa-

Savioreſſe. *Oecolampadius* thus delivers his approbation of her. *I truſt in God it ſhall never be ſaid of me, that I did oppoſe the dignity of* Mary, *towards whom to be never ſo little ill affected, I hold to be a moſt certaine ſigne of a Reprobate minde. She who is above all, Queene of all, whom God above all hath honoured, ſhould not ſhe be eſteemed amongſt all the moſt eminent?* *Bucerus* proteſteth, *That a godly minde will not judge but charitably and prouſly of her, who brought forth Chriſt our Lord:* *Bullingerus* concludes; *If* Mary *be bleſſed amongſt all women, and to bee pronounced bleſſed by all Nations, moſt curſed are the Iewes, who never ceaſe to reuile and ſlander her; and moſt unhappy are thoſe Counterfeit Chriſtians, who (being little better than Iewes) robbe her of*

the praiſe due to her. Needs muſt ſhee be indued with a ſingular moſt ſelect, and perpetuall Virginity and purity, who is eſpecially choſen by God to be the Temple of his Sonne, and the Mother of the moſt holy. Now if any of theſe contradict themſelves by pulling downe in other places thoſe Trophies of her praiſe which here they haue erected, they are to be anſwered as the Satyre did the Man with whom he ſaid he would no longer converſe, becauſe he ſaw hot and cold breath to iſſue from the ſame Mouth. But to leave them; All parts of the world have produced Admirers of her worth.

Syria

Syria hath brought forth *Ephraim.*

Antiochia Saint *Chryſoſtome.*

Capadocia Saint *Baſill*, and Saint *Nazianzen.*

Conſtantinople, *Germanus* and *Proclus.*

Dalmatia, Saint *Hierome.*

Germany, *Rupertus*, *Albertus*, and *Agrippa.*

England, *Bæda.*

France, *Bernhard.*

Spaine, *Alphonſus.*

Italy, *Aquinas* and *Bonauenture.*

Affrick, Saint *Cyprian*, and Saint *Auſtin*.

Greece, *Dionyſius Areopagita*, *&c.*

To theſe ſucceed famous Chriſtian Poets, antient and Moderne, who have written Pannegyricks upon her, as *Bæda*.

Gregorius Nazianzenus.
Innocentius Pontifex.
Actius Sanazarius.
Adam de Sancto victore.
Alcimus Avitus.
Antonius Muretus.
Aurelius Prudentius.

Bap-

Baptista Mantuanus.
Claudianus.
Franciscus Petrarcha.
Godfridus Viterbiensis.
Hieronymus Vida.
Paulinus.
D. Philippus Menzelius.
Rudolphus Agricola.
Sedulius.
Venantius Fortunatus.

To these I adde many Emperours, Princes, and Princesses, and a world of devout great ones, who have beene her professed admirers, as *Constantine* the great.

Charles

Charles the great.

Pulcheria Augusta.

Henry the second, Emperour.

Alphonsus the chaste in *Spaine.*

Edovardus in *Hungarie.*

Bolislaus in *Polonia.*

Venceslaus in *Bohemia.*

All

All which are Canonized for Saints, and have erected and dedicated Temples to her Memory. Neither have the Princes of this our Ile beene defective in doing her all possible honour, and in Consecrating Chappels and Temples to her Memory. *Frederick* the third Emperour, made the Contemplation of her, almost his onely food. *Stephanus*, King of *Hungarie*, called his kingdome the *Marian Family*. In this glorious Family, whole kingdomes and Common-wealths have enrolled themselves. My Arithmeticke will not serve mee to number all those who have Registred their names in the Sodalitie of the Rosary of this our blessed Lady, the originall of which

which is derived from the battaile of *Naupactun*, gain'd by *Iohn* of *Auſtria*, and the Chriſtians, which victory was attributed to her interceſſion with her Sonne. The Colonian Sodallity firſt inſtituted, had out of *Lovaine*, 4000. out of *Brabant*, 30000. out of *Gueldria*, 4000. out of *Holland* and *Zeland*, 7000. &c. Many holy Orders alſo are of this Sodality, as the Benedictines, the Ciſtertians, the Franciſcans, the Carthuſians, and many others. If all theſe Teſtimonies and Examples of great worthy and pious people will not move us to honour her, we ſhall be judg'd both unworthy of this life, and ignorant of that better to come. For ſhame let not us alone deny her that honour and praiſe which all the world allowes her.

After

After theſe impartiall witneſſes of her worth, we will place thoſe divine priviledges imparted to her by the Almighty, for which we have (if that alone were ſufficient) the Authority of many pious, learned men.

1 *Priviledge.*

Firſt, they affirme, That her Chaſte eyes ſent forth ſuch divine beames that (though her Loveli-neſſe moved not onely all mindes to honour her, and all Eyes to gaze on hers) yet they never kindled an unholy fire in the moſt Adulterate boſome. A ſacred priviledge peculiar to this Saint alone; for it was the will of her omnipotent Sonne, that neither Sathan nor his Miniſters ſhould conſpire the overthrow of that chiefe Temple of

of his Spirit, which his fleſh had inhabited ſo long, nor any impure thought ayme at the mudding of this pureſt Fountaine. Whether her prophetick Soule foreſaw the ſnares of the ungodly, and ſo ſhun'd them, they ſay not, once for certaine they averre, that Temptations aym'd at her, broke like Haile againſt a Rocke, nor could all the Engines of the world, the fleſh, and the Divell hurt her more, then can the vapours ariſing from the earth, reach the holy inhabitants of Heaven. And this opinion (for ought I know, I ſubmit it to better judgements) may without, or profanation, or blaſphemy, be admitted into all honeſt boſomes: for if beyond the power of nature he preſerved *Ionas* entire in the Whales Belly,

Belly, if he protected *Daniel* from the ravenous Lyons, should not he secure her from Corruption whom he had adorn'd with so many vertues and dignities?

Next, they hold that she was not onely without blemish, but her very lookes sent forth such heavenly rayes, that whosoever beheld them, drew thence a vestall fire that never went out, and vowed an everlasting Virginity. If this be a truth, it is a curious one, and it is not materiall at all whether or no it be beleeved, or rejected. 2 *Priviledge.*

Thirdly, that she conceiv'd and bore her Sonne, not onely without paine (the common Curse annexed to Childe-bearing) but with 3 *Priviledge.*

with infinite delight. This alſo is a Curioſity, and of no importance whether it be ſwallowed or no.

Fourthly and laſtly, that ſhe had a Frigidity of Soule, which quencht in her all heat of carnall concupiſcence. This laſt priviledge is implyed in the firſt, and may perchance ſafely be received. The truth is, we may ſecurely give her all humane attributes (not encroaching on the divine) for ſhe was in dignity above all, but God himſelfe. Faith and Charity, the fulneſſe of the Law were in her at full. She was in an active and contemplative life, admirable. The Tongue eſteemed the worſt part in a woman, was in her the beſt, which well might charme Eares, offend them it could not. Her

Soule

Soule weigh'd her Conceptions, and gave them a rayment of vertues owne hiew; for certainly ſo cleere thoughts were apparell'd in as faire words. She who both after her conception, and at other times is commended to us by the ſacred Scriptures, for laying up all holy Sayings in her heart, can we imagine that ſhe could ſpeake amiſſe? Neither could ſhe commit any undecent Act, who liv'd in a Light to others inacceſſible. They who maintaine that for a time the whole Militant Church was in her alone, have probability to backe them; for I know not in whom elſe it could remaine, when his Apoſtles, Diſciples, Friends, Kindred, and all others forſooke Chriſt, ſhe onely excepted, who would not leave him, who from

before his birth, had ſtucke to her. I will conclude with this Aſſertion, That if ever the Soule of any mortall enjoyed here on earth the embraces of her heavenly Spouſe, and tooke from him a kiſſe ſweeter than all the Eaſterne Odours, this was ſhe.

And

And here, O bleſſed Virgin! I leave to diſcourſe further of thee, and direct my ſpeech to thee. O thou eternall glory of thy ſexe! had the Queene of Sheba *ſeene thee, as ſhe did* Salomon, *ſhee had not ſo ſoone beene delivered out of the Trance into which her Admiration caſt her. In thee ſhee might have diſcovered all the perfections of which woman kinde is capable, who wer't indeed vertually thy ſexe. In thee* Aſpatia *might have found her Modeſty,* Livia *her Prudency,* Sulpitia *her*

Apoſtrophe Authoris.

her Majeſtie and Gravity, Cornelia *her Patience*, Lucretia *her Chaſtity*, Porcia *her Fortitude*, Tanaquill *her Induſtry*, Plautina *her frugality, and all theſe in eminency. But why talke I of the Heathen to thee, who didſt not onely outſtrip in manifold vertues all the Femall, but the Maſculine Saints themſelves? Thou didſt excell* Abel *in Innocency*, Abraham *in Faith*, Iſaac *in Obedience*, David *in Gentleneſſe, the Prophets and Apoſtles in Piety, and the Martyrs in Patience. O thou whom Heaven would have of*

the

the ſame conſtancy, purity, and ſublimity with it ſelfe, thou art ſo farre from having an equall, that all thy ſexe cannot afford a worthy witneſſe of thy Excellencies! O thou Mother of the true Moſes, *who never put on the yoke of* Pharaoh, *but ſtood free in the middeſt of* Egypt! *Thou rodde of* Ieſſe, *alwaies ſtraight, who broughtſt forth the fruit of life! thou wert here a terreſtriall Paradice, whereinto Serpent never entred, on which Gods malediction was never impos'd, and haſt no doubt, now in the cœleſtiall Paradice a conſpicuous*

ſeate above all the Angelicall orders, and next thy glorifi'd Sonne himſelfe. For if Chriſts promiſe to all his fellow feeling members, that if they ſuffer with him, they ſhall raigne with him, if they dye with him, they ſhall live with him; what eminent place in Heaven ſhalt thou have aſſigned thee, who in ſoule didſt ſuffer for him more, than all his Martyrs? O thou baſhfull Morne that didſt precede and produce our Sunne! Thou Circumſcription (if I may ſo ſay) of the uncircumſcribed! Thou roote to this Herbe of Grace! Thou Mother of our Crea-

Creatour! Thou Nurſe to him by whom all things are fed! Thou Comprehender of the incomprehenſible! Thou bearer of him whoſe word ſuſtaines the Globes! Thou who didſt impart fleſh to him, who wanted nothing elſe! Thou Sarah, *thou Mother of many Nations, who brought forth our* Iſaac, *our Laughter, when a juſt ſorrow conceiv'd for a loſſe eſteem'd irreparable had clouded this inferiour world! O pardon, gratious Princeſſe, my weake endeavours to ſumme up thy value, which come as ſhort of thee, as my head does of Hea-*

ven. Nothing that is not it ſelfe glorified, can expreſſe thy glory to the height. Thou deſerv'ſt a Quire of Queenes here, and another of Angels in Heaven to ſing thy praiſes. Were all the Earths brood, the droppes, the ſands of the ſea, and the ſtarres of heaven tongued, they could not all expreſſe thee ſo well, as ſilent extaſie. I confeſſe, O my ſweeteſt Lady! that now I have ſaid all I can of thee, I have but but done like Timanthes, a great Maſter in his Art, who being to expreſſe the vaſtneſſe of a Cyclops in a ſmall table, drew onely

onely his Thumbe, *by which the ſpectators might judge of his large proportion.* To *give thee an eſtimation anſwerable to thy merit, is a thing impoßible: I muſt therefore be content to doe by thee, as the antient Heathen did by the Images of their* Gods, *on whoſe heads, when by reaſon of their height, they could not place the Crownes, offer'd to their Deities, they humbly layd them at their feet.*

FINIS.

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